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STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS; A FRONTIER STATESMAN - the first phase.

Study of a formative principle in Western  
Statesmanship from 1840 - 1850.

Division of the subject.

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Being an account of the general con-  
temporary conditions of the State  
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largely on original research and  
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THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

RESEARCH REPORT

REPORT OF THE

COMMISSION

ON THE

RESEARCH

IN

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Study of a Familiar World  
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INTRODUCTION.

(1) "The one great and comprehensive movement  
in our history is found in the Western movement  
of our people from the quiet towns of our colonial  
days, across

INTRODUCTION

AND

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

(2) "The legislation which has developed the  
growth of the National Government, and placed the  
largest part of its activities in the hands of  
the Executive, where there were formerly  
of local, and internal improvement, as  
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will be seen that the slavery question is an incident  
in the growth of Nationalism, and the evolution  
of American political institutions and development.

INSTRUCTION  
AND  
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STEPHEN A DOUGLAS; A Frontier Statesman - The first phase.

Study of a formative principle  
in Western Statesmanship, from 1840 - 1850.

INTRODUCTION.

(a) "The one great and comprehensive movement in our history is found in the Westward expansion of our people from the coast towns of our colonial days, across the Appalachian mountains, to the Mississippi Valley, then to the plains of the farther West, and again over mountains and across deserts to the rich valleys of the Pacific Coast." (1)

(b) "The legislation which most developed the powers of the National Government, and played the largest part in its activities, was conditioned on the frontier. Writers have discussed the subjects of tariff, land and internal improvements, as subsidiary to the slavery question, but when American History comes to be rightly viewed, it will be seen that the slavery question is an incident . . . . the growth of Nationalism, and the evolution of American political institutions were dependent

(1) P.J.Treat; The National Land System. p 370.





on the advance of the frontier." (1)

"On the tide of the Father of Waters, the North and South met and mingled into a Nation." (2)

"The East has always feared the result of an unregulated advance of the frontier, and has tried to check and guide it." (3)

(c) "The Western Democracy is important, not only because it played the leading part in our political history down to 1850, but precisely because it does offer, in a primitive, but significant form, a combination of the two ideas which when united, constitute the formative principle in American political and social development . . . whatever the alliance between nationality and democracy, represented by the pioneers, lacked in fruitful understanding of the correlative ideas, at least it was solid alliance . . . . The Federal Union really meant to them something more than an indissoluble legal contract. It was rooted in their life, It was one of those things for which they were ready to fight; and their readiness to

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(1) F. J. Turner: Significance of the Frontier in American History.

Senate Miscellaneous Document, Vol. 4. Being the Annual Report American Historical Association, 1893, p217.

(2)- F.J.Turner, ibid, p.221.

(3) . F.J.Turner, ibid, p 224.



of the situation of the country. (1)

"On the 1st of the month of January, 1900,

North and South met and signed the following:

"The first and second parties to the treaty of

the 1st of January at the city of New York, and the

United States of America, and the

(2) The second party to the treaty of the 1st of

January, 1900, at the city of New York, and the

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fight for the National idea was the great salutary fact. Our country was thereby saved from the consequences of its distracting individualistic conception of democracy, and its merely legal conception of Nationality. It was because the followers of Jackson and Douglas did fight for it, that the Union was preserved." (1)

"The Western Pioneers were the first large body of Americans who were genuinely national in feeling. They were also the first large body of Americans who were genuinely democratic in feeling. They contributed to our national stock the experience of homogeneous intercourse . . . . It was a democracy based on genuine good-fellowship." (2)

(d) "I learn from an expression in your letter that the people of Kentucky think of separating, not only from Virginia (in which they are right) but also from the Confederacy. I own I should think this a most calamitous event, and such a one as every good citizen should set himself against. Our present Federal limits are not too large for good government, nor will the increase of votes in Con-

(1)- Herbert Croly: The Promise of American Life.  
pp 55-6.

(2) - ibid. p 61.







8.

gress produce an ill effect. On the contrary it will  
drown the little divisions still existing there.

Our Confederacy must be viewed as the nest  
egg from which all America, North and South is to  
be peopled. We should take care, too, not to  
think it for the interest of the great continent  
to press too soon upon the Spaniards. Those coun-  
tries cannot be in better hands. My fear is that  
they are too feeble to hold them till our population  
can be sufficiently advanced to gain it from them,  
piece by piece. The navigation of the Mississippi  
we must have; that is all we are, as yet, ready to  
receive." (1)

(e) "To create the body of a Great American  
Commonwealth by removing barriers to its continental  
expansion, so that the soul of Liberty might dwell  
within it, was no vulgar ambition. The conquest of  
the continent must be accounted one of the really  
great achievements of the century. In this drama-  
tic exploit Douglas was at times an irresponsible,  
but never a weak nor a false actor." (2)

(1)- A letter written by Thomas Jefferson, in 1785  
to A. Stewart, Esq, quoted by Mr. Foote, when speak-  
ing on the Ten Regiment Bill, in the Senate;  
Cong. Globe 30 C. 1 Sess. p. 214.

(2). - Allen Johnson; Stephen Douglas 1908, p 108.





The foregoing quotations have their significance for this thesis in revealing the scope of the work and emphasizing the essentials of Frontier Statesmanship. The authors quotes are the authority in their field, and to one, Dr. Frederick J. Turner, we are peculiarly indebted, both personally and through his writings, for a broader outlook upon the field of American history.

It is a noteworthy thought that the most painstaking study and careful research upon one field in the history of our country - the field of our colonial and federal existence to the Civil War east of the Appalachians - should fail to give us a truthful interpretation of American life to that time. We have but taken ourselves as Anglo-Saxon or Teutonic children, inheriting the forms of a life passed down to us, believing much in the destiny of the race, yet attuning our ears so slowly to the more independent voice of prophecy. The East has seen her child, the West, grow and develop into manhood but has remained largely controlled by the conservative forces of the past. Too often forgetting



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even the lessons of her own youthful attempts at self-government, she has sought to impose the hardening hand of unsympathetic authority in the interest of local selfishness. Too often has the East forgotten the natural desires of a free and growing manhood to assert its independence and make good in achievement the assertion. In the presence of our own children, the fruit of our own loins, if we are wise we shall reshape and recast our own thoughts. To really see the growing of others helps most to the understanding of ourselves. When this process is one of sympathetic adjustment to inevitable differences there is peace and mutual welfare, but our own history has very sadly emphasized the sectional rigidity of our moral and intellectual narrowness. That we have finally been enabled to rise above our limitations is the largest note of prophecy in the history of American civilization. The study of American history, until very recently, has been centered upon the evolution of our race from the forests of Northern Germany to Great Britain and on through the many social, constitutional and industrial modi-



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fications and enlargements, the revolutions and changes in the intellectual and religious thinking to the planting of the colonies, their organization upon British or German models, and, finally, to the development of the thought of independence and the formation of the federal government. The influences going to create the forms of that government have been studied from the standpoint of documentary evidence and the spirit of growth has been placed in the wise change and gradually shaping point of definite institutions. The constitutional history of England unquestionably affords a most remarkable example of historical development, but the sources for that evolution were men and the times. The historical method as applied to the study of documents has eternal merit, but the spirit of the constitutional historian, in its chief desire to seek for the truth - as with the great Bishop Stubbs - must be capable of studying men as men, and not as documents, must see that there are ever present in the interactions about us forces active in response to laws, more vital and more secure in their vital-

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ity than the repeated affirmations of a long line of immortal documents.

The historical basis for our civilization and the early planting upon our shores have been well placed and elaborately traced. But so far we have treated simply of the English advance to the western shores of the Atlantic, a nation trying itself out in the struggle for settlement. The settlers upon the coast were the factors of a new civilization, themselves children of a mighty nation, engrossed with their own struggles and largely severed from their old connections. They did a great work and erected the young giant among nations, but their thoughts still go back to England, their trade relations continue the tie, and they prove a profoundly modifying influence in the development of England herself. There were vaster things in the making than ever our fathers dreamed of, as the spreading of the settlements, first to the mountains, and then across those barriers into the wilderness, the prairies and the plains of the West, so amply testify.

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The preoccupation of the East in its own problem of development and adjustment to the mother country, was soon rudely disturbed by the rapid settling of the West, calling for the help and advice of the parent state. Then, indeed, were provoked those same reactions on the part of the parent state which in so many instances had marred the early relations between England and the colonies. The parent was unwilling to acknowledge its own child's right to the experience of venture and maintained the worst traditions of the rod and rule. The result was finally the freedom of the child, willingness and ability to dress itself in the clothes of statehood, to assume the duties of government, and to create a new democracy among its numbers that was to sweep back over the parent stock and produce profound change. *complete as the process was inevitable. The*

From the time of the earliest crossing of the mountains the tales of the hardy and venturesome spirits returned to stir and arouse others "to go and do likewise". The constantly hardening conditions in the older regions supplied a steadily ad-

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vancing and increasing stream of pioneers, all seeking land for ownership and as a means to earn a living and to live freely. This was the fundamental impulse that started and continued the expansive movement across the continent, and its only justification lies in the nature of the American man - his ambition - whether for land, or freedom, or liberty, or wealth, or power, or office, or any other possession or attainment. So far as we apply to this ambition the hard and fast law of the strict moralist we shall have but scorn and condemnation for the pioneer settler. There were many who so scorned, and there was much condemnation. So far as we look at things in the large and seek to establish the natural and essential relations of time and place, we shall feel that the justification must be as complete as the process was inevitable. The lands of this earth are for men and women and are not to be dedicated to fur-hunting and sport to be forever the roaming grounds for savage life.

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To the student of American history who has followed the traditional path to the Civil War, the slavery struggle, at least after the administration of Jackson, will seem to be the all engrossing subject, compared with which others are either insignificant or at most secondary. If the facts in our history are to be read with our eyes turned toward the East, the struggle between the North and South would rightly fill our vision. But, if we consider the interactions between the North, South and West, we shall discover that the unoccupied lands of the West furnished the source of most of our great National questions, and that the slavery issue was incidental, though pressing for a time into the foreground. A superficial reading of the debates in Congress, from 1830 on, will convince one how greatly the opinions of the West affected our legislation and from the time that the South united with the West in the policy of expansion and the tariff (about 1840) the control of legislation had passed away from the North-east. In our system of federal government, where the states are equal, the passing of

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New England's influence in the Senate was natural and to a lesser extent in the House, but her moral influence continued its sway through the peopling of the North-west with her children, even though these would often be found upon opposite sides to the parent on purely economic questions.

It is unnecessary to go farther in thus stating the part of the West in our country's development prior to the war of '61.

The quotation from Dr. Treat stresses the significance of the "Westward expansion of our people" and apart from all considerations of the ethics of the various stages, the facts are of first importance in our history. As Dr. Turner states, the major part of our National Legislation "was conditioned on the Frontier". The legislation upon the land question was voluminous and very vital, involving the Indian problem, expansion, territorial and state organization, and the question of slavery.

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The citation from an early letter of Thomas Jefferson makes clear that one of our statesmen in the early days saw the meaning of the broad areas of the country to the little line of people fringing the coast. He felt that this line could be no more than a "nest-egg"; that our people would press ever onward towards the Pacific Coast "gaining piece by piece" until the continent was won.

Finally the statement from Professor Johnson that in "the conquest of the continent Douglas was never a weak or false factor". Here we lead into the subject of our thesis.

Stephen A. Douglas came out of the East and was a part of the West. His life was at once absorbed by the life about him, and in the spirit of the hour and place he labored, and never abandoned his chosen

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work until the end came in 1861. But one has to rise to fame through some particular service, and Douglas served his party in the belief that it best represented the state and nation. Again, one has to serve his party in some peculiar way, and Douglas did so in his genius for organization, displayed in the several positions he filled.

The period of Douglas was when Illinois was passing beyond frontier conditions and the main door for advancement lay open for anyone who could show a better and a quicker way to accomplish desired ends. Douglas studied through men the habits and customs and wishes of the people and devised a simpler machinery for the democracy of good fellowship. He rose to the position of Representative in the National Legislature, and there he was forced to do something of value if he would retain the leadership so far gained. Could he hold the power over men of reputation he had acquired over politicians of his State? To achieve the distinction required an identification of his life with some large national principle vital to the interests of the West. He review-

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ed his own busy life in Illinois for the past ten years. That life had formed for him a practical, first-hand knowledge of the things foremost in the thought of the Western man; it had also taught him the needs, the hopes, and the fears of the people; it had given him a sympathy for the man who seeks relief from hard and stubborn conditions, and the selective principle of his judgment was confronted by the opportunity to hew his way to the front. How he did this was not so much his concern, but simply that his aptitudes and talents had made him an instrument in the service of his party, his state, and his country. The materials at hand were not fashioned by him. The highest word we can say of Douglas perhaps at this stage of his career, would be that he used means to increase his efficiency and he sought not to create nor instill moral purposes. He was primarily a worker, not a teacher, and he does not quarrel with his tools but sharpens them through usage.

The present thesis is an attempt to define and accentuate the first phase in the National career of

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The present thesis is an attempt to define and approximate the first phase in the National career of



Stephen A. Douglas as a Jacksonian exponent of the principle of expansion. The period covers the years from the close of 1843 to about the time of the agitation over the Compromise Measures, when the question of slavery becomes a pressing one, and the prominence of the principle of expansion in Douglas' national work suffers an eclipse. The 1850 development brings us to a second phase in Douglas' career, with which we are only subordina- tely concerned.

Douglas has so long been regarded as a states- man, a politician, or a demagogue pure and simple, because of his connection with the Kansas-Nebraska legislation and the overthrow of the principle of the Missouri Compromise of 1820, that the importance of this earlier, this essentially formative phase of his life has been neglected. This neglect has resulted in a short-sighted understanding of the man through stressing a phase of his work that he endeavored early and late to avoid, and which was in reality external to his nature. The question of slavery was more than a political question - it

Stephen A. Douglas as a Jacksonian exponent of the principle of expansion. The period covers the years from the close of 1845 to about the time of the agitation over the Compromise Measures, when the question of slavery becomes a pressing one, and the prominence of the principle of expansion in Douglas' national work suffers an eclipse. The 1850 development brings us to a second phase in Douglas' career, with which we are only superficially concerned.

Douglas has so long been regarded as a statesman, a politician, or a demagogue pure and simple, because of his connection with the Kansas-Nebraska legislation and the overthrow of the principle of the Missouri Compromise of 1820, that the importance of this earlier, this essentially formative phase of his life has been neglected. This neglect has resulted in a short-sighted understanding of the man through assessing a phase of his work that he endeavored early and late to avoid, and which was in reality external to his nature. The question of slavery was more than a political question - it



was a moral question - and a statesmanship that could handle all sides of this issue would have to be large enough to deal with and to include principles that were both political and moral. The mere politician would prove inadequate. The pure moralist would likewise fail. The statesman of the hour would be a personality of depth and richness, for the vanity of argument had become largely apparent. Neither Douglas nor Seward could meet the needed conditions. When Douglas found it necessary to deal with this question in order to carry on his original work, he attacked boldly and accomplished one thing uniquely, to show that the day for compromise was passed so far as avoiding the final settlement of the slavery issue was concerned. He broke our relation to past compromises and placed unequivocally before us the real issue, - the sovereignty of the state over all domestic concerns, shall it be supreme? If the American people were willing to accept state sovereignty, the slavery question as a political issue would pass, and slavery would become an unquestioned national in-

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stitution through the abolition of its sectionalism. This was an accomplishment in purpose and method of achievement beyond the power of any other man in Congress, a veritable tour de force in the focussing of the national mind. By 1856 we come to the period of modification in Douglas, evidenced by his statesmanlike opposition to the Lecompton Constitution - with its fraudulent attempt to force slavery upon Kansas - and he carries the state for freedom. Douglas now passes through his period of moralization under Lincoln - a last phase-- when in 1861 he courageously supported Lincoln and the Union.

The career of Douglas from 1850 on has received abundant treatment but throughout there is apparent failure to recognize the problem uppermost in the mind of Douglas as he approaches the slavery discussion. Primarily concerned with expansion and organization of the West, he met the slavery question on the threshold of his Senatorial career. He first knocked it out of the way with the proposition to include the Wilmot Proviso, and then shoved

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it along with his extension of the Compromise Line to the Pacific, and finally planted it in the will of the people to decide as a State question.

Towards slavery itself his attitude was indifference, it was non-moral. His concern was entirely to eliminate it as a political measure forever.

The significance of this first phase is vital in arriving at any true judgment upon the work of

Douglas, and it is the formative principle of expansion that shapes the constructive part of his

National career. It is early apparent in his

House career, dominates his attitude toward all

the national questions, passes through the period

when it becomes the most truly popular of issues,

and verges toward its decline when it meets with

the larger problem of international adjustments.

This carried us through the House period and the

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Our thesis then deals with the Douglas conception of expansion, rather than with the organization and development of territories and states, problems that have helped Douglas to frame his dominant principles and which persisted long after the opportunity for increasing out national territorial limits had occupied the chief place in popular thought. But with Douglas the two problems are very closely associated, and it is his position as Chairman of the Committee on Territories in House and Senate that furnished him with the field and its larger usefulness. We cannot dissociate the two lines of treatment. The final solution of the Oregon Question in the form of a compromise but curbs his major ambition turning his with renewed energy to the more practical problem of organization.

In our history expansion is a frontier problem - a dealing with conditions on the outer edges of civilization - sometimes on the edges of a declining older civilization - and with these conditions Douglas had made himself familiar and pressed

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their consideration. In this he was more than the politician, he was the Statesman of the Frontier.

Our method of approach to this problem is firstly - historical and descriptive of the conditions prevailing throughout the period of one typical Western Territory and State, Illinois, the adopted home of Douglas; secondly - biographical in the treatment of his early life in Vermont and in Illinois up to his election to the National House; thirdly - a critical study of his Congressional period to 1848, as found in his speeches, debates, etc., and through the presentation of contrasting and favoring arguments of his fellow politicians.

24(a)

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LIST OF ILLINOIS CONDITIONS TO 1890.





PART I.

SKETCH OF ILLINOIS SETTLEMENT FROM  
1778 - 1850.

The following sketch of Illinois  
History is based very largely upon two monographs,  
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I have used Ford as the basis for political  
matters, using a contemporary source, and  
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This sketch of Illinois is necessary to the formation of any just conception of the Congressional career of Stephen A Douglas. The evolution of the State from primitive conditions to civilization was in its high tide when Douglas first came to the West in 1833. He accepted the history and life of the State exactly as he found it, but the current of that life was given a momentum - perhaps even a direction - not possible without him. To determine the real significance of this emphasis that some estimate of its validity may be attained, requires that the character and tendency of the States' development prior to the arrival of Douglas be stated.

Illinois region had to come from the general government. In 1790 Illinois was organized under the Ordinance of 1787. In 1800 the National Government made a division of the region north of the Ohio, and formed the territory of Indiana. The formation of Indiana was the result of a growing jealousy on the part of the settlers of the arbitrary exercise of authority of the elder, wealthier and more aristocratic settlers, over the newer and more primitive settlers, near the river and

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arrival of Douglas be stated.



A.

PRE-TERRITORIAL PERIOD.

1778 - 1809.

We find that on December 9, 1778, by an Act of the Virginia Legislature, there was created the County of Illinois, including the region and inhabitants of Virginia, north of the Ohio River, for their more effectual protection and defense.<sup>I</sup>

By failure to renew the act in 1782 this County ceased its existence. On March 1-1784, Virginia ceded her western lands to the United States, and thereafter all titles to land in the Illinois region had to come from the general government. In 1790 Illinois was organized under the Ordinance of 1787. In 1800 the National Government made a division of the region north of the Ohio, and formed the territory of Indiana. The formation of Indiana was the result of a growing jealousy on the part of the settlers of the arbitrary exercise of authority of the older, wealthier and more aristocratic section, over the newer sec-

I. See Journal House Delegates Va Oct. Session 1778  
pages 106-7.





tion - Illinois - seeking to gain its rights. The Eastern half of Illinois country had grown faster and was better developed, and it sought to impose its control upon the Western half, with the same resulting dissatisfaction that had in former days, been manifested by the newer regions back from the coast settlements. It was nothing strange, nothing new, but it was inevitable, and it is a process that repeats itself in every forward movement of the population, so long as there are free lands to be acquired beyond the border.





B.

### THE TERRITORIAL PERIOD.

1809 - 18.

In 1809 Illinois was made a territory of the United States, its population being eleven thousand. In 1810 the United States census gives the population of the four Colonies west of the Alleghonies as :-

Kentucky - 406,511

Ohio - 230,760

Indiana - 24,520

Illinois - 12,282

---

Total 674,073

This territory was organized upon the Ordinance of 1787, made U.S. Statute Law by act of Congress in 1789. There are two or more principles of this Ordinance that have special significance for us in the developement of Douglas's peculiar work in Illinois, and the National House, which we shall here simply state.

## THE TERRITORIAL PERIOD.

1800 - 18.

In 1800 Illinois was made a territory of the United States; its population being eleven thousand. In 1810 the United States census gives the population of the four colonies west of the

Alabama	406,211	-	-
Kentucky	830,780	-	-
Ohio	84,880	-	-
Indiana	12,282	-	-
Illinois		-	-
Total	674,073		

This territory was organized upon the Ordinance of 1787, under U.S. Statute law by act of Congress in 1789. There are two or three principles of this Ordinance that have special significance for us in the development of Douglas's peculiar work in Illinois, and the National House, which we shall have to study.



"There shall be formed in the said Territory, not less than three, nor more than five States. . . and whenever any of the said States shall have 60,000 free inhabitants therein, such States shall be admitted by its delegates, into the Congress of the United States on an equal footing with the original States, in all respects whatsoever; and shall be at liberty to form a permanent constitution, and State government."<sup>1</sup>

"Provided, the constitution and government so formed, shall be republic, and in conformity to the principles contained in these articles."<sup>2</sup>

"There shall be neither slavery, nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than in the punishment of crimes whereof the party should have been duly convicted: Provided, always, that any person escaping into the same, from whom labor or service is lawfully claimed in any one of the original States, such fugitive may be lawfully reclaimed, and conveyed to the person claiming his or her labor or service, as aforesaid."<sup>3</sup>

The above four principles from the Articles of the North West Ordinance -

1 *ibid* Art 5

2 *ibid* Art 5

3 *ibid* Art 6





- (a) Equality with old States, upon admission,
- (b) Freedom from restrictions as to form of government - save republicanism, -
- (c) Slavery prohibition -
- (d) Fugitive slave Law -

together with the declaration as to the common usage by all the States of the navigable water-ways, ~~These~~ have fundamental importance in the evolution of territories and States, and in the career of Stephen Douglas.

The settlers in Illinois came mostly by water route from Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina. They came first through the Cumberland Gap, and over the Wilderness Road to Crab Orchard, to the Falls of the Ohio, to Vincennes, and to St. Louis. The Rivers of Ohio, Cumberland, Tennessee and Kentucky were the chief water highways for this early settlement.

The organization of the Territorial government of Illinois reveals, through the nativity of those forming such government, a significant fact in this early period. The constituency of

- (a) Kennedy with old States, upon admission
- (b) Freedom from restrictions as to form of
- Government - save upon admission
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The organization of the Territorial gov-  
 ernment of Illinois reveals, through the activity  
 of those forming such government, a significant  
 fact in this early period. The consequences



42.

the government was completely Southern - its Governor, its first Legislature, the Legislative Council, the Territorial Judges, and the Secretaries, the Delegates to Congress, the Committee for Choosing the Laws, - all from Southern States, Pierre Menard of Canada alone excepted. Twelve laws were chosen for the Territory, and of these, eleven were selected from the existing laws in the Southern States.<sup>1</sup>

The influence of the South in the period of Illinois history to its admission into the Union as a State, was not only dominant, it was all in all. We shall have occasion to recur to this striking characteristic of the early population. Its bearing upon the career of Douglas was quite as influential, speaking relatively, as upon the course of Illinois history.

The territorial period of Illinois history extends over but nine years, 1808-1818, but they are years of growth in population, and in the developement of formative influences. The passage of several land acts, by the National government, materially aided in the building up of the

I - "A people practically Southern in origin was being governed by officials from the South, under Southern laws" Boggess p 112.





State, especially the Act of 1813, which gave the settlers a right to preempt  $1/4$  section of land they occupied, and of entering it upon the payment of  $1/20$  of the money. For the first time the settler began to feel some sense of security concerning his investment.

The public land offices, three in number, are opened, one at Kaskaskia, one at Shawneetown, and one at Edwardsville. Through these offices there was now offered an opportunity to purchase land on the same terms it had been sold at in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New York.

Boggess sums the advance made by Illinois from 1809-18 as "

- (1) Right of pre-emption gained.
- (2) Progress made towards the extinction of Indian titles.
- (3) Sale of Public Lands initiated.
- (4) Practical elimination of French claim as source of danger to settlers. 1

In short we may say that this territorial period in Illinois history did much, very much in giving to the pioneer settlers confidence in their opportunity.

1. - Settlement of Illinois from 1778-1830  
A. C. Boggess, 1908.





c.

# PERIOD OF STATEHOOD.

1818 --

In January of 1818 the territorial legislature of Illinois sent a petition to its delegate in Congress, Nathaniel Pope, praying for admission into the Union as a State. In April of 1818 it became a law, with two amendments, de novo proposed by Mr. Pope (1) the extension of the Northern boundary assigned by the ordinance of 1787 to parallel 42° 30' N. latitude; (2) the application of the 3% fund arising from the sale of public lands to the encouragement of learning, instead of road making into the State, as Ohio and Indiana had done.

The original line marking the Northern boundary of Illinois had been an East and West line drawn through the Southern bend of Lake Michigan, but Pope found that there was no legal reason to prevent extending this line as far north as the Canadian border, and recognising with remarkable

PERIOD OF STATEHOOD.

1818

In January of 1818 the territorial legislature of Illinois sent a petition to its delegate in Congress, Nathaniel Pope, praying for admission into the Union as a State. In April of 1818 it became a law, with two amendments, to move proposed by Mr. Pope (1) the extension of the Northern boundary assigned by the ordinance of 1787 to parallel 42° 30' N. latitude; (2) the application of the 3d fund arising from the sale of public lands to the improvement of navigation, instead of road making into the State, as Ohio and Indiana had done.

The original line marking the Northern boundary of Illinois had been an East and West line drawn through the Southern bend of Lake Michigan, but Pope found that there was no legal reason to prevent extending this line as far north as the Canadian border, and recognizing the territory



foresight the need of, and value to, Illinois, of a Lake outlet at Chicago, he proposed the 42° 30' line. This gave the back lying country necessary for the future growth of Chicago, with a sufficiently prominent and extensive water-front. Mr. Pope's foresight was even more significant in the reason advanced to Congress for the acceptance of the amendment, namely, that Illinois was bounded on the East and West and South by Rivers, all feeding the State from the South and the West, and that in case of any sectional trouble, the State would stand inevitably with the Southern States. This would be unnatural because the larger part of the State was geographically in the Northern zone, and with an inlet and outlet on the Great Lakes, there would soon be enough Northern settlement to balance the other section. This could be accomplished by including Chicago and the whole of the Illinois-Michigan Canal within the limits of the State.

Illinois became a State, though its real population did not equal 40,000, it being made to seem so, however, by recounting those who had moved from one County to another. The Constitutional





Convention called to frame a State government gave considerable appointive power to the Executive - an inheritance from the older sections that the people dissaproved of - and the legislature quickly drew over to itself the supreme power in the State through control of the patronage. This Convention did not abolish slavery, but prevented the farther extension of it, and freed all children of slaves - males at 21 - females at 18. Involuntary servitude, through indentures, might run for a term of 99 years. The Convention was made up of fourteen Southerners, 5 Northerners (one of these a New Englander).

The first Governor was Shadrack Bond from Maryland; The first Senators Ninian Edwards and Jesse Thomas, Southerners.

The movement of population into the State can hardly be said to have kept pace with the real westward trend. Boggess splits this emigration up into four classes, based on motives as follows:

- (1) Anti-slavery people (Germans and Irish coming up by the water-ways from the valley)
- (2) Those unwilling and unable to change from small to large farms.





- (3) poor whites, finding land in demand.
- (4) Slave holders wishing large tracts of virgin soil.

The fourth class would be very likely to avoid the Illinois region, because of the uncertain legal status of slavery. The desire to get this class, because of its wealth, into the State, had its effect upon State legislation and the enforcement of laws.

We must still name the Indian difficulties as a deterring factor in the Illinois settlement, but in 1819 we have the Kickapoo tribes ceding the region lying North of 39° and so opening up for surveying and sale an important section.

Sangamon County - of Douglas and Lincoln fame - was included in this cession. In 1829, Northern Illinois was relieved of all Indian claims, except the Winnebagoes, but the close of the Black Hawk War sees the last of Indian claims as a force restraining the movement of population.





The speculation in lands was at high tide about 1819, due largely to the emigration from the East and the inflow of specie money. Up to 1820 the United States government sold land at \$2.00 per acre, at \$80.00 per quarter section, balance due in five years. Purchasers schemed to buy the land, pay the \$80.00 in bank notes, and sell out again before the five years were up, at a higher price. But the bank failures in bordering States caused a failure of Illinois banks, and the notes that had hitherto been accepted for cash, were now valueless.

In 1820 the Government abolished the credit system in land business, cut down the price to \$1.25 per acre, and required the purchase to be for 80 acres at \$100.00, equal to one-eighth of a section. This action was not unexpected, in that region, as Peter Cartwright, a Methodist preacher visiting Illinois, testifies to the presence of many squatters,<sup>1</sup> waiting for Congress to reduce the price. In 1821 the State created a bank solely on its own credit. It issued notes from \$1.00 to \$20.00, bearing two-per-cent interest

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payable in ten years. Its officers were politicians, elected by the legislature, and were ordered to loan these notes, up to \$100.00, to people on personal security. The notes were receivable in payment of taxes, and mortgages and salaries.

Governor Ford cites an incident which may illustrate the crudeness of frontier legislation.<sup>1</sup> Colonel Menard was presiding over the State Senate when the resolution was put for making these bank notes, \* money. Putting the motion he said,

"Gentlemen of de Senate, it is moved and seconded dat de notes of dis bank be made land - office money. All in favor of dat motion say aye; against it say no. It is decided in de affirmative - and now, gentlemen, I bet you \$100.00, he never be made land-office money."

Menard was at least possessed of shrewd foresight, for the Supreme Court, later, in *Craig vs Missouri*, declared the bills, <sup>to be</sup> bills of credit and unconstitutional.

Over three hundred thousand dollars had been lent to people by these political bankers,

1 - Ford; History of Illinois p 45.

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so that in 1824 there was no money in the State and bills were out in two. It was estimated that by 1831 over half a million had been lost to the State, and the whole confidence of the people shaken. When the notes of the bank came due in 1831 they had to be met in some way, and finally to save the honor of the State, one hundred thousand dollars was borrowed of one "Wiggins," and the loan paid, but those who voted in the legislature to borrow were forever damned in the eyes of the people for "selling the State to Wiggins" - yet it was the only honorable way. The above well serves to show how little the people of those times knew of large financial undertakings, and how far they were from grasping the true State and National function in reference to banking and currency and internal improvements.

In 1830 the sales of public lands for the Western States were -

Indiana 413,000 acres	Illinois 291,000 acres
Alabama 233,000 "	Missouri 183,000 "
Ohio 160,000 "	Michigan 106,000 "
<del>Mississippi 104,000 acres.</del>	





This shows that the center of settlement was Indiana ; that it was moving to Illinois and Alabama; that the people were now passing beyond the Ohio region. The price of land per acre over all this region, about 1830, was \$1.25 plus, so that there was no marked inequality as to price. Opportunities and special inducements were offered by the separate States- for instance, the 1830 Act of Illinois Congress, to give the right to pre-empt not more than 160 acres to any who were actually cultivating the land in 1829.

We have already mentioned the Southern character of the population to 1818. Though there was an increase in the Northern element after 1820 we cannot discover that the influence of a Northern minority was effectual prior to 1830. As a basis for this statement, in the political field, we find that there was no Governor of the State from the North until John Reynolds of Pennsylvania, was elected in 1830, - 34; 1842-61 saw Northern Governors, one of whom was from New England. From 1861 to 1873 we again have Southerners in the executive office. Before 1825 there was no Northern Senator in Congress; no Northern Representative

*See Appendix B.*





before 1830. Maryland, Virginia and Kentucky exercised the chief political control up to 1840, though it was disputed more and more after 1830.

### SLAVERY IN ILLINOIS.''

The slavery situation in Illinois is one of the most difficult and most important of all the political phases in her history. It is complicated,

1. Because of the geographical extension of the State,
2. Because of the character of the population,
3. Because of the clause in the NorthWest Ordinance prohibiting slavery.

The State of Illinois has an extreme length of 385 miles from North to South, which equals, upon the Atlantic coast, the region from Northern Connecticut and Rhode Island to the Southern boundary of Virginia. If we stop to consider how varied

1- See Appendix B.





were the interests, how widely different the thinking, and how differently constituted the population in the States of Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, we can realize some primary difficulties that have from time to time confronted the Statesmen of this Republic. Mere length of itself may have no appreciable influence upon the character of a States developement, unless the State through such extension passes into changing zones of influence, of increased relative values of influence by natural advantages of boundary. The changing zones may be such from climatic or physiographic reasons, inducing variety in the natural interests of the State. Illinois furnishes an excellent example of a State long enough from North to South to partake of the distinct advantages of a varying contemporary climate, thus inviting to its confines those accustomed to the climate of New England, and at the same time those brought up within the region of Northern South. Illinois also furnishes an example of a State richly favored by its natural boundaries, the rivers and the lake, bringing to its borders residents from many quar-





ters. While these physical varieties in a State are to be ranked as assets, yet, they may often prove the source of distinct problems. A state like New York, whose zone of settlement extends from East to West will not be subject to problems arising from fundamental differences in tradition and training of its waves of settlers. Interfering currents there will always be, but hardly of sufficient strength and persistency to overcome the original flow. Had there been no mountain barriers in Virginia and the Carolinas, permitting of a free East to West movement, slavery would have become strongly rooted in Kentucky and Tennessee, and undoubtedly in the States farther North. Ohio, Indiana and Illinois would probably have passed to the slavery column, before the tide of Northern settlement was strong enough to overthrow it. A state like Florida or California furnishes the extreme type of a land made rich by the nature of its boundaries.

The above geographical situation of Illinois brings about a change in the character of the settlers, from the fact of three different approaches to the State. We have -





(1) The French, or early settlers who used the Mississippi as the method of approach:

(2) The Southerners from Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee, later from Missouri and other South-western States, using the Southern rivers;

(3) The Northerners from Pennsylvania, New York and New England who came down the Ohio and over roads, and finally via the Lakes.

Lastly the Ordinance of 1787 prohibited slavery in the Illinois territory, but guaranteed to the French their property, and they held slaves.

There was a failure to absolutely abolish the institution. The State Constitution of 1818 also allowed slaves to be brought into the Saline Creek Salt Works to 1825. Indentures ran in some cases for 99 years, while the slave code of 1819 enacted the "black laws", thus emphasizing a clear distinction between the races. Slaves from other States could not come in and thereby gain emancipation, while resident negroes had to file certificates of freedom, and slaves could be whipped.

Slavery and indentured servitude in Illinois lasted until 1845, while the "Black Laws" were





56,  
in operation until 1865. The number of slaves in Illinois in 1810 was 168, increased by 1820 to 917, the largest increase shown by any Northern State. This was probably due to the fact of Southern travel by wealthy slave holders, who from 1820 - 1830 moved on to Missouri, that State being opened up to slavery by the Missouri Compromise of 1820. In 1830 there were 747 slaves in Illinois; in 1840 there were 331 slaves and before the next census slavery was abolished.

It was because of the geographical situation of the State that the slavery question became an acute problem, and it would have proven serious indeed, if the majority element had been truly representative of their home State conditions. But the early pioneer from the South into the region of Illinois felt as Washington and Jefferson and hundreds of others from slave states have felt, that slavery as a system was bad and should be abolished. These men could not hope to overthrow conditions in their home States, and many resented the enforced stratification of society due to slavery; so we get a considerable element from the South who may be classed as practically anti-slavery. In





a more or less free community their influence would count for freedom. This fact is strikingly brought out in the 1822 election for Governor. The total pro-slavery vote was 5300, the total anti-slavery vote was 3300. There were two tickets placed in the field by the pro-slavery people and the anti-slavery candidate, Edward Coles, won the election. Coles was a Virginian who had been private-secretary to President Madison, and had travelled abroad; <sup>he</sup> had emancipated the slaves once held by him in Virginia, and was engaged in settling them upon farms in Illinois. He was, at this time, Register of the Land Office at Edwardsville.

Two years later - in 1824 - an attempt was made to alter the constitution so as to admit slavery. After some sharp political jugglery to gain the necessary two-thirds majority in Congress for placing question of calling a convention, before the people, the result of the popular vote, was such a reversal of the 1822 vote - a majority of 1668 against the convention - that it came as a surprise. An analysis of the vote shows that there was a large increase of Northern emigration and that the Northern Counties of Illinois gave anti-





convention votes. Take simply six typical counties, three in Northern Illinois, three in Southern Illinois:

Sangamon (Northern )	for	Cong.	153	Against	722
Morgan	"	"	"	42	" 455
Pike	"	"	"	23	" 261
St. Clair (Southern)	"	"	427	"	543
Randolph	"	"	"	357	" 284
Gallatin	"	"	"	506	" 133

The two things that stand out very boldly here are

(1) Illinois was saved to the free-soil cause by the vote of her Northern counties.

(2) An increasingly large element from the South was anti-slavery.

The legislature, composed of eighteen Southern men, showed eleven opposed to slavery, while several Northerners advocated slavery. Leaders for anti-slavery were frequently found among Southern men, and leaders for slavery among Northern men. This may offer some ground for the reason why Douglas, coming from the North, spoke for slavery, and Lincoln, coming from the South, spoke for freedom.





## THE TREND OF DEVELOPMENT .

The settlement and developement of Illinois show hardly any absolute breaks, and present one of the most unique and fascinating chapters in the creation and growth of Statehood. A division of this settlement, for purposes of study has been made by Dr. Pooley, as follows:- <sup>1</sup>

- (1) Period of French occupation,
- (2) From the coming of the Americans to the opening of steam navigation of the Lakes.
- (3) From Lake navigation to opening of railroads across the prairies.
- (4) From 1850 (close of 3) to the present.

With the third period we are now to deal as this covers the years from 1830 -50, and this again is divided for convenience, into four periods;

- (a) To the close of the Black Hawk War
- (b) Period of Speculation and rapid development to the collapse of the States internal improvement system.
- (c) Period of depression - 1837 - 45

1 - William Vipond Pooley: Settlement of Illinois 1830-50. A monograph.

# THE TOWN OF NEWPORT.

The settlement and development of Illinois show clearly any special tracks, and present one of the most unique and interesting chapters in the history and growth of the State. A division of this settlement, for purposes of study has been made by Mr. Pooler, as follows:—

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- With the third period we are now to deal as this covers the years from 1830-50, and this again is divided for convenience, into four periods:
- (a) To the close of the Black Hawk War.
  - (b) Period of speculation and rapid development to the collapse of the States internal improvement system.
  - (c) Period of depression - 1857 - 65.



(d) Revival of confidence and increase of emigration.

(The results of Dr. Pooley's exhaustive investigations will be followed here, together with the work of the historians, Ford, Moses, Davidson and Stuvé, with consultative references to the Congressional Debates, the American State Papers, and other sources.)

We have found that the early development of Illinois flowed from the lower end of the State towards the North. This movement received its first check in 1832, when the Black Hawk War broke out, and effectively threw back the advancing frontier line of pioneer-hunters. The result was very significant in the State history, for we have the second class (point-of-time) the farmer pioneer on the extreme frontier edge. But, as if to make this overturn even more noticable, the opening of steam navigation on the Lakes at the same time, brought right to the frontier line, farmers who were not hunter-pioneers. The established order or western advance had been,

(d) Revival of confidence and interest in

emigration.

(The results of Mr. Peck's extensive investigation will be followed here, together with the work of the historians, Ford, Hesse, Fawcett and others, with representative references to the General Sessions, the American State Papers, and other sources.)

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- 1 Hunter-pioneer
- 2 Small farmer (temporary)
- 3 Large farmer (permanent)

This was the order both South and North, but the process was slower in the South. There we find the forests thicker, the distances greater, and the individualism of the Southerner resisting co-operative movements more prominent, all tending to add to the period of the hunter-pioneer stage, and to retard the later stages. In the Northern regions the large Water-ways, the opening of steam navigation, and the New England Community idea of movement lessened the time element between the stages, tending almost to bring the quick succession of types - and in the case of Illinois, even a reversal of the established order. The pioneer would bring his equipment with him together with his teacher, preacher and merchant. The most favored sights for settlements were the timbered tracts along the river's edge, but as these came to be taken up, then the elevated regions, back from the river. It was necessary to do more than supply his own wants; he must first find a home





62.

and then a foreign market, therefore must be near the highways. Produce must be passed down the Mississippi to the Ohio to go east, or it must be sent over land 150 miles to Chicago and the Lakes.

The earliest settlements had been in the Great American Bottoms, made by the French, from the mouth of the Kaskaskia River to the mouth of the Illinois, and including about 600 square miles. The people were not enterprising, were not farmers and were wholly dominated by priests.

In 1781 the Americans came, and by 1800 we have 350 families mostly soldiers left by the George Rogers Clark campaigns against Kaskaskia and Vincennes. In 1786 and 1793 Virginia sends out colonies. Shawneetown, on the Wabash, begins its period of growth, after the government had purchased Salt Springs in 1803 from Indiana and leased them to Captain Bell of Kentucky. These springs were necessary in those days that farmers might get the salt for purposes of preservation. Settlement was undoubtedly hindered by the uncertainty of the land titles, owing to the four periods of ownership by French, British, Virginian and

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Federal authorities. The 1804 Commission, after a labor of ten years succeeded somewhat in adjusting these titles by the opening of the Kaskaskia land-office. The 1813 pre-emption act, and the stopping of Indian raids prepared the way for settlement. The European wars had destroyed the commerce of the seas, and New England men were turning their faces towards the West, so that by 1830 the Counties of Illinois had increased to twenty-six over the fifteen at the time of Statehood.

The pioneer settlers in the South had gradually worked their way Northward, coming into Sangamon County in 1819, and by 1830 this large County had been made into six counties. Springfield was established in 1819, and soon became the most important town in the central part of the State. Jacksonville, in Morgan County, was about the same size.

An entirely new problem now meets the pioneer as he seeks to explore and locate his claims away from the main highways. Woodlands give place to prairies, and the timber that shelters from the heat of summer, from the chilling winds of winter; that furnishes the fuel, and the material for build-

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ing, is wanting. It is no wonder that the hunter-pioneer stopped at the edge of this treeless waste, turned back, or skirted its border. It is no wonder that the farmer-pioneer hesitated to venture a clearing in, what seemed to him, barren lands, for in those days it was held that the best soil grew the thickest timber tracts. He was yet to learn of the fertility of prairie land, and his vision could not make him see the waving wheat fields in the long grass of the prairie. Dr. Poolley says <sup>1</sup> "Before 1832 the settlement of a State was only a continuation of the pioneer days in older States. Now a new problem confronted the tide of pioneers who were crossing the Continent. On the wide, treeless expanses of Eastern and Northern Illinois were to be solved the problems which gave rise to a new class of frontiersman - the prairie-pioneer."

We have found that the Black Hawk War of 1832 had stayed the advance of the hunter-pioneer, and thrown him back upon the farmer state. At the cessation of the war he began a slow movement to recover his lost ground, but the delay had been

1. - Poolley p 329

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sufficient to bring to the borders the advancing host of farmer-pioneers from the North, and the farmer who intends to buy and permanently hold his land is first, upon the prairie. Finding the river land all bought up,- a few daring ones ventured out into the prairie, and learned that the soil was very fertile- could be worked without very great expenditure of money - that trees could be grown from seed - coal dug for fuel - houses built of clay - fences erected, through the invention of wire fence. The greatest problem seemed to be the way to get the produce to the markets without consuming all the profits in high transportation rates. He soon learned to ship his wheat to Canada through the Chicago port. Ultimately comes the plan to develop the whole region by connecting the Illinois River with Lake Michigan through means of a canal. The matter was first mentioned as far back as 1818 by Governor Bond; in 1822 by Governor Coles. In 1827 Congress granted to Illinois every alternate section in the belt of country extending on both sides of the canal for six miles back. In 1829 a Canal Board was organized; in 1835 the first loan was made and work begun in 1836; it was

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finished in 1848 through the assistance of the Government, secured by Douglas.

The period of internal improvements brought about changes and developements in the Wabash, Illinois, Rock and Kaskaskia Rivers, and the opening of the Grest Western Mail Route, between Vincennes and St. Louis - the central railroad from Cairo to Galena. It could be said that by 1835 the period of the farmers had come, for the land of fertility had been found, and the way of transportation was rapidly making for profitable investment.

In the history of Illinois development the great problem had been transportation and markets. The solution has come through Federal and State assistance, in the improving of rivers and the making of roads, and the building of Chicago as the link between the producer and the buyer.

The causes of the expansion movement to Illinois and the West from 1835 to 45 were chiefly economic. We shall specially emphasize this phase as being the basis for the career of Douglas as a

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67.  
State builder and organizer. The causes outlined by Dr. Pooley are classes under two heads as:-

(1) General causes of National Import

(a) Restless Spirit pervading all people.

(b) System internal improvement.

(c) Financial.

(2) Special causes of local import.

I - a. There seemed to be brooding over the people in the Eastern States from North to South, a general spirit of dissatisfaction, with the circumstances everywhere existing around them. It was not a situation which sprang entirely from failure or even bare success in the daily tasks of life, for it was present among those who might be called fairly prosperous. It was due in part to the tendency of the age to migrate, in the hope that better and easier conditions for living might elsewhere be found. The returning reports from the frontier, and the presence of friends and relatives "out yonder", all had their supplementary influence in bringing about the decision, as well as the desire, to go.<sup>(1)</sup> But a deeper truth

1- See Appendix A.

State auditor and treasurer. The same was  
by Mr. Loomer and signed under two names and

(1) General causes of National Income

(2) Health and vitality of the nation

and

(3) System internal improvement.

(4) Financial.

(5) Special causes of local income.

I - a. There seemed to be nothing over

the people in the United States from North to  
South, a general spirit of dissatisfaction, with  
the circumstances everywhere existing around them.  
It was not a situation which sprung entirely from  
failure or even bare success in the daily tasks  
of life, for it was present among those who might  
be called fairly prosperous. It was due in part

to the tendency of the eye to migrate, to the  
home that better and easier conditions for living  
might elsewhere be found. The returning tourists  
from the frontier, and the presence of friends and  
relatives "out yonder", all had their suggestive  
tendency to influence in bringing about the decision,  
as well as the desire to go. But a deeper truth



lies in the fact that economic conditions in the East were hard and oppressive, and the farmer was met at every turn by two stern facts. He needed more land, and there was no more land to buy, at his price. He was beginning to be haunted with the thought that the Western farmer would soon actually undersell him in his own market - compelling him to lower his prices, and reduce his profits. Why should he not sell his Eastern land for a good price, emigrate to the West, buy much more land (it only cost \$1.25 per acre) and have a hand in the underselling of his old time neighbors?

I - b. The great improvement in the conditions of travel made the barrier of distance seem less of a real hardship. The better roads, and steam navigation aided mightily in this movement.

I - c. From 1831 to 1840 there were many financial depressions throughout the entire Eastern section of the Country. In contrast to this there were the many instances of money quickly made through speculation in western lands. Irrespective of the immense amount lost in the frenzied speculations of the time, there were these specific

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cases of success, or apparent success, upon which the disappointed Easterner fastened, and as a result there was great mapping and platting out of towns "that were miles in the woods and feet under water". Some of these towns would surely satisfy the cry of the dissatisfied easterners of those days to be "twenty miles from law and calomel", for they are that today, and could be bought for less than the price fixed in those early days.

The cost of living among workmen in 1836 was 64% more than in 1834. In 1837, nine-tenths of the factories had ceased operation. Grave indeed were the circumstances facing the laborers of the whole thirteen States, especially the Northern parts.

2 -. The local causes were very numerous, but from the first settlement of New England there existed the tendency of the people to examine how things were some where else, and they moved up and down the coast, along the river valleys, - first of their own region - then New York, - then Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa; going southward to New Jersey and Pennsylvania.





New England might be said to have passed through three stages of economic growth - first the agricultural, second, the wool raising, and third, the manufacturing. The surface conditions of the section do not permit of large farming, and by 1830 the small farmer had pretty well covered the section and land could not be easily purchased. In the twenties and thirties the wool industry became the most prominent feature, but quantities of land are required for this industry and the poor man could not afford to buy, yet found himself willing to accept the money offered him for his own tract - and with this emigrated to the west, or satisfied himself with dairying.

The manufacturing stage of New England began about 1840, and was to prove to be the one best adapted to the type of country. However the coming of the foreigner into the cities and the factories operated to counteract the good effect that manufacturing might have had in holding the native element at home.

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pressure brought to bear upon the people, forcing first the movement from the country to the city, and then to the west.

The influence of the Erie Canal was exceedingly vital in bringing about a strong trade competition between the East and the West. By 1835 the Illinois farmer was sending his wheat to the East at a cost of about 30c freight per bushel, but in 1845 he was required to pay only 5c per bushel. While this canal was built by the New York tax payers for their own benefit, the truth seems to have been that the real benefit inured to the Western farmer, and the least benefit to those living twenty or more miles back from the canal. To keep the canal up the tax bore heavily upon this back lying class, and the inevitable result was a forced emigration to the West.

The emigration from Pennsylvania was more even - more gradual, but we find in 1850 that there were over thirty eight thousand people from this State resident in Illinois. The emigration from the South had some marked causes. From the section of the planters - the 1837 crisis in the

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cotton crop, and the falling price of tobacco. The poorer farmers felt the effects of a high tariff and they were also unable to gain control of the good lands because the large planters owned immense tracts of land, which they would not release.

The institution of slavery, with the resulting stratification of society and the failure of all free labor to gain a foothold might be called the chief incentives to emigration. The results, of course, were to make more absolute slave conditions in the South by removing all opposition to the system, and to strengthen the hostility of the North.

From the States of Ohio and Indiana the emigration increased somewhat to Illinois, due chiefly to financial panic and indebtedness on the part of individuals.

The emigration to Illinois came into the State over the usual roads of travel, summarized by Pooley:

"The settler who located in Southern and Western Illinois generally came by way of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers; Those who settled in the

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"The routes that passed in Southern and  
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Northern part of the State, by way of the Great Lakes; while the majority of pioneers of Eastern Illinois came by wagons over no beaten road". (1)

Douglas came from Canandaigua to Buffalo, thence to Cleveland and gained the Ohio River by the way of the Cuyahoga and Scioto Rivers.

The Illinois River, starting near the center of the Western section of the State, and going up to its source in a North-easterly direction came to be the meeting place of the two types of pioneers - from the South, and from the North. The Southern hunters clung to the timbered regions along the banks of the River, and went far up, where they met the farmer-pioneer, coming down and over the country from the Lakes. But close behind the upward progress of the hunter were also a large number of New Englanders, and New Yorkers, the close succession due, as before mentioned, to the Black Hawk War. We have then a large region in the North that may be said to have had no knowledge of the first class of pioneers. It is important in any study of the influences that went into the

(1) - Pooley, Illinois p 374.

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making of Douglas' later (after 1850) career, to understand the character of this Northern district of the State, especially as it is soon to become the dominating portion of the State.

Let us take, for instance, the list of three hundred pioneers in Will County, and eight hundred in La Salle County. We find that 43% of the settlers in these typical Northern Counties came from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey; 22% from New England; 3% from the South, and less than 2% from Kentucky and Tennessee.

In the military tract North of Sangamon County we find a list of 143 pioneers from Quincy; 28% come from the Middle Atlantic States, 18% from New England, 15% from the North-West, 12% from the South; 12% from Kentucky and Tennessee, 11% from foreign parts.

The same proportion holds true for the Rock River region, including Rockford and Galena.

Eastern Illinois, known as the prairie district of the State, owes its great period of advancement to the legislative activity of Douglas

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Let us take, for instance, the list of  
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than 2% from Kentucky and Tennessee.

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in carrying through his Illinois Central Railroad Bill in 1849. Population, at first came from the South, up the Wabash, or from Sangamon County. The towns were located on streams and in timber tracts. Of 1138 pioneers in this region, Pooley finds <sup>(1)</sup> from Ohio, 280; Kentucky, 210; Tennessee 106; Indiana 80; Illinois 80; Southern States, 160; Middle Atlantic States 80; New England but a few. The difficulty of getting into this region from any but one or two highways, accounts for the change in the character of the population.

One other phase of the territorial development, and the growth of industrial centers remains to be mentioned in this brief survey - the rise of the City of Chicago.

In 1820 - a village of a dozen houses, perhaps 60 people, made up of half-breeds, French, and Virginians. Its position on the Lake gave to it early importance, but by 1830 there were only 100 inhabitants. When the Chicago land office was established there was a great rush to buy and

1 - See Pooley for these statistics pp 440-61.

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in 1837 we find a city government, a population of 4179, and the organization of Cook County. However the panic of '37 kept back the tide, and in 1845 there were only 7580 people in Chicago. But the farmers had learned to use the city as the port for exporting East, and for two-hundred and fifty miles back of the City came the wagon and train loads of grain. By 1850 the population had leaped to 20,000.

Chicago was the gate-way of commerce and her career is exceptional. Not the normal type of western development. Behind the city was the vast storehouse of the West, needing an outlet, and finding Chicago the means to the end. Beyond the City lay the markets of the East and Europe, the home of capital. The situation then created the exceptional port and enabled the commercial interests and ambitions of the West to come more rapidly to fruition. The character of her population would naturally be varied with a strong foreign tinge. In 1850 one third of her population was made up of foreigners, but New York and New England were well represented.

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The question of immigration to the State is an exceedingly important one in determining later the positions, politically speaking, taken by said State. We have noted the character of these Western migrations in the case of several of the geographical sections and it remains now to emphasize more particularly the foreign character of the Illinois population.<sup>(1)</sup>

By 1850 Illinois had within her borders the total of 110,600 foreigners, divided up among the Germans, Irish, English, Scotch, Scandinavian French, Swiss, Portuguese, and Poles. Of these the Germans chose the agricultural regions, as did the English, Scotch, French, and Swedes, for in 1850 more than 90% of her population was non-urban.<sup>(2)</sup>

The agricultural interests of the State throughout the period of Douglas were absolutely supreme, a fact that is the chief reason for his main political interest - land. Illinois was essentially an agricultural state from the beginning of her history, until 1890, when her urban and manufacturing element had jumped from about 25%

1- See Pooley Illinois, 491-507  
Walker Mississippi Valley, p 347  
Educational Review p 100, 242.

2 - 12th Census U S reports. See plate No. 20.

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in 1880 to 40% in 1890, and the 1910 census brings this up to 50% (1.) From 1790 to 1860 the State of Illinois had relatively less urban population than any of her sister states, and the development of manufacturing after 1860 becomes the means of changing the whole character of the State.

The opening up of cheap lands for sale throughout the Mississippi valley from 1820 to 1850, together with the increased comfort and ease of travel, were the prime causes, for the flow of foreign immigration into the State. That the greater part of this inflow came from the Northern sections of Europe - the sections opposed to slavery because of competition with free labor, aids in the understanding of the State's position in the critical days from '50 to '60.

With the causes at home instigating an immigration we are not concerned more than to state that they were mostly economic, partly religious. The Germans by 1850 had come to the number of 38000, and settled chiefly in the Northern sections - an agricultural and social people, with democratic tendencies. The Irish, to the number

1- Consult U S census reports for different years.

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1 - Consult U S census reports for different years.



of 28,000 in 1850, came for the most part to the towns, having an inherited prejudice against agriculture; because of this they became day laborers, factory hands, road builders, but were not so desirable citizens as the Germans. A contemporary writer says of the Irishman: "his weakness lies in success, for with \$10.00 in his pocket he is abashed by nothing in Heaven, Earth, or Chicago". The English to the number 18,500 in 1850, came to Illinois. These seemed not to be the best type of English laborers for they know very little of agriculture. As pioneers the English were not successful, being unable to throw off their old customs, and fit in rapidly with a newer life. By 1850 there were about 4660 Scotch in Illinois, who proved very desirable citizens because of their frugality and industry, and their knowledge of agriculture. The Scandinavians to the number of 3500 settled largely in Henry County-the Bishop Hill Colony.

The French practically exerted no influence upon Illinois history, after 1830.

There were special conditions that en-

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The series of admirable plates or maps given in the government report for the 1900 census returns, shows clearly the state of development in Illinois from decade to decade.

For 1790 - Plate 2 - there was simply the settlement at Kaskaskia along the Mississippi River, where the density of population was anywhere from 2 to 6 per square mile. All the rest of the territory was absolutely frontier, for at that time the frontier line did not reach beyond the Appalachian Range.

For 1800 - Plate 3 - there was practically no part of Illinois territory that emerged beyond the frontier stage, though the frontier line had been pushed beyond the Mountain Range to

1 - A.M.Low: The American People, For effects upon psychology of a people of change and environment and conditions.

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The series of statistical plates or maps given in the government report for the 1900 census returns, shows clearly the state of development in Illinois from decade to decade.

For 1780 - Plate 2 - there was almost no settlement at Kaskaskia along the Mississippi River, where the density of population was anywhere from 2 to 3 per square mile. All the rest of the territory was absolutely frontier, for at that time the frontier line did not reach beyond the Appalachian Range.

For 1800 - Plate 3 - there was practically no part of Illinois territory that emerged beyond the frontier range, though the frontier line had been pushed beyond the Mountain Range to

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the edge of Ohio, and was advancing from the South in Tennessee and Kentucky.

For 1810 - Plate 4 - there is found along the Mississippi and the Ohio boundary of the Southern part of the territory, a fringe of settlements that lifts the region thereabouts out of the frontier of unsettled lands, while the settlements have increased rapidly in the lands to East and South.

For 1820 - Plate 5 - there is noticeable quite a filling in for some distance back from the main rivers making the lower third of the State have a population whose density is equal to Class I, ( 2 - 6 per square mile) while one or two sections have risen to Class II (6-18 per square mile).

For 1830 - Plate 6 - perhaps a third of the State, the Southern portion, has risen to Class two (6-18 per square mile ) while there is a fringe of out-lying settlements equal to another third that comes into Class I, (2-6).

It must be noted, however that the prairie region in the East, reaching down into Southern Illinois is entirely unsettled. In the mean time

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with the small exception of a certain number of well defined Indian tracts, the frontier line reaches to the Mississippi and beyond, in a South-westerly direction from Lake Erie. Some of Ohio, more of Indiana, still more of Illinois, and all of Michigan and Wisconsin, are frontier. (1)

For 1840 - Plate 7 - The United States frontier line has been pushed westward beyond the Mississippi in all the country except Northern Michigan, the greater part of Wisconsin and Florida. Within this Eastern half of the Country there still remain regions whose density of population is less than two per square mile. In Illinois only a small section of the prairie land is unsettled, while parts of the State have risen into Class three ( 18-45). (2)

For 1850 - Plate 8 - The density of population in Illinois rises from Class I, on the prairies to Class IV (45-90) about Chicago. (3)

For 1860 - Plate 9 - No part of the State falls below Class II (6-18) and the whole State might be said to be fairly well settled.

1. See Map Opposite.
2.   "       "       "
3.   "       "       "

with the small exception of a certain number of  
well defined Indian tracts, the frontier line passes  
to the westward and beyond, in a south-westerly

direction from Lake Erie. Some of Ohio, and

of Indiana, with some of Illinois, and all of

Michigan and Wisconsin, are included. (1)

For 1840 - Plate V - The United States  
frontier line has been passed westward beyond the

Mississippi in a country except North  
Carolina, the greater part of Wisconsin and Florida.

Within this western half of the country there  
are two regions whose density of population  
is less than two per square mile. In Illinois  
only a small portion of the territory has been  
settled. The greater part of the State has been  
left

unsettled. (2)

For 1850 - Plate VI - The density of  
population in Illinois rises from Class I, on the

Atlantic to Class IV (45-90) about Chicago. (3)

For 1860 - Plate VII - No part of the State

is in Class I (0-10) and the whole State

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CONCLUSION.

This concludes the study of Illinois development previous to and during the period, when Douglas was a prominent factor in the life of the State and the Nation, to 1850. Its value for the purpose, lies in the understanding given of the problems confronting the rise of new territories and States, in the United States, and with the rise of these territories, their initial organization, Douglas is perhaps more closely identified than any other man in our history.

It is an historic fact that the history of one State in its developmental processes is re-enacted in slightly varying forms in the early history of other States - that the evidences of a frontier condition have first to be dealt with, and to a certain definite extent, eliminated, ere the period of prosperity will begin to dawn, unless there are very exceptional reasons for a rapid growth, as in the case of California and in some respects Kansas, the stages are fairly even and regular.





The Indian question, with all it implies as to personal security, and satisfaction of title to land, must be a known quantity: the opening up of territory, through a public sale of lands, where the title is more than a squatter's chance; the opportunities for help from the government in the shape of internal improvements, making possible the market within reach, and a lessening difficulty of travel. In the history of the West these were the underlying problems that had first to be dealt with by the frontier statesman, before it was possible to reap the reward of any rapid and permanent growth. Much of this pioneer work was accomplished when Douglas came west, but it exerted its influence upon him, and testified to the needs of early state work. His later great State and National activities will show how vitally he was concerned in the whole phase of development - will show how completely he had become the Statesman of the frontier.

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PART II.

STUDY OF VERMONT, ITS INFLUENCE

UPON DOUGLAS.

1813 - 1830.

Vermont had formed the back ground for  
many a thrilling romance, many a stirring scene.  
her through the prospect of mountain paths and  
valleys and fields of grain and meadows.

PART II.

STUDY OF VERMONT AND ITS INFLUENCE.  
The study of Vermont and its influence  
upon the life of the people of the State  
is a study of the life of the people of the State  
and of the life of the people of the State.

in the history of the State and of the life of the people of the State  
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PART II.

STUDY OF AIRBORNE AND ITS IMPORTANCE.



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P A R T   I I .

SKETCH OF VERMONT, ITS INFLUENCE  
UPON DOUGLAS.

1813 - 1830.

Vermont has formed the back ground for many a thrilling romance, many a stirring scene; has thrown the atmosphere of mountain patriotism and of political independence around many a son who has wandered away from her borders in search for fame or fortune, - but could we know the connectives in the career of Stephen Arnold Douglas we might have romance and stirring scene, patriotism and political independence marvelously intermingled with the more apparent qualities of a frontier politician.

How far "the scenes of our childhood" imprint their kaleidiscopic changes upon the individual is a problem capable of very diverse solution, but most likely is it that the world of physical nature is wholly dependent for the efficiency of her instruction upon the responsiveness of the self. She can speak as she spoke to Wordsworth,

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to Thoreau, or Whitman: she can say no more than she says to many a farmer's boy, to many a driver of the stage across the mountain passes. She can woo to the depths of a wilderness of beautiful silence as Boone was wooed or she may fall almost absolutely to arouse the spark of venture, or start the soul in wonder. The evidence of her touch may be straightway apparent, or it may not reveal itself until the shadows fall about the life of man.

The individual at first stands planted upon the bed-rock of physical inheritance and tradition, and is supplied with the means for acquisition-physical, mental, and moral. This acquisition is chiefly a storing of impressions upon which the instincts and intuitions of the life of self may react with growing intelligence. There can be no impressions that are not received by the individual soul - for that soul, yet for another there may be unnumbered millions flowing from the same environment. Every soul has something to be called forth if the right stimulation is applied, but the environment must be of a selected quality and emphasis to produce its effect. A soul moved by the hills

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vironment must be of a selected quality and emphasis  
to produce the result. A soul moved by the will



and by the gently sloping farms, dotting the landscape, and the streams that may be utilized for service, must be a soul sensitive to subtle influences - capable of being pervaded by spiritual forces - at least in general ways. Was Douglas such a one? Did the great moments of his life rest something of their significance upon these early days in Vernont? Or was this period simply a physical training ground to the lad who left it at seventeen?

These are the questions that arise in the case of most of our prominent lives - fundamental ones - and we shall attempt to answer them, in the case of Douglas, when it seems possible in the development of his life and work, to do so. As our main concern, in the present Thesis, is with the Congressional work of Douglas for the West, we shall here but sketch the early life, and pass in review the physical, intellectual and social atmosphere of the State and period. The essential facts of ancestry - environment - and personal progress will be related - in the hope of a fairly truthful evolution. Perhaps the "Autobiographical





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Sketch", so far unpublished but in the possession of a son of Stephen Douglas - Judge Robert Douglas, of Greensborough, North Carolina, - would give us more needed information, but Allen Johnson, his best biographer, failed to gain very much from its perusal. As it is, our information is very scattered.

Stephen Arnold Douglas was born at Brandon, Vermont, April 13th, 1813, of Stephen Arnold and Sallie Fisk Douglas. His father, who died three months after his son's birth, was a physician and the son of Benajah Douglas, a native of Massachusetts. Benajah came to Brandon from New York in 1795, purchasing of Captain Daniels 390 acres of land,<sup>(1)</sup> He appears to have been much in the public notice, for he was five times the towns representative in the General Assembly and five times Selectman, a Justice of the Peace, and a leading member of the Methodist Church. He was said to be "a man of much self-confidence, and buoyancy of spirits, always ready in meetings, 'open to remarks', indeed he was rather given to much speaking, he had a vein of humor, which he

1. - Vermont Historical Gazetteer  
edited by Abby M. Hemenway, vol 3.  
See Brandon account pp 428 - 501.

"Eaton", as far as I know, was the possession  
of a son of Stephen Eaton - John Eaton, son  
of Grandfather, John Eaton, - would give  
me some needed information, but John Eaton, his  
great-grandfather, failed to give very much more  
information. As it is, our information is very  
incomplete.

Stephen Arnold Eaton was born at  
Burlington, Vermont, April 15th, 1855, of the son  
of John and Katie Eaton. His father, who  
died three weeks after his son's birth, was a  
physician and the son of Benjamin Eaton, a res-  
ident of the community. Benjamin came to Burlington  
from New York in 1832, practicing of General Practice  
and more or less. He appears to have been  
born in the United States, for he was five years  
the town representative to the General Assembly  
and five times elected, a member of the State,  
and a leading member of the Methodist Church.  
He was said to be "a man of much self-confidence,  
and philosophy of action, always ready in action,  
'open to suggestion', indeed he was rather given to  
being opinionated. He had a vein of humor, which he



did not always restrain within due bounds" (1) He had nine children, was less than middle height, with a large head and body, but short neck and limbs. He was kind and accommodating, possessing many physical and mental traits that we shall find later in his grandson. The wife of Benajah Douglas was a Martha Arnold, a descendent of Governor Wm. Arnold, of Rhode Island. The Arnold stock was Welsh.. Going farther back the first name of Douglas family to arrive in this country was William Douglas, of Scotland, who married Mary Ann Marble, of Northampton. There is record of the birth of a son in Boston, 1645. (2)

Upon the death of Stephen A. Douglas, Sr. the widow, with her two children (daughter, 18 months older than Stephen) moved to the farm of Henry L. Leonard, an uncle, where they stayed until young Stephen was fifteen years of age. (3)

Douglas acquired a common school education at the village school, and in the course of time came to think that he would be able to go to college, but the marriage of his uncle, Mr. Leonard, and shortly

1- Idib 457.

2- Allen Johnson - Stephen Douglas, A Study in American politics.

3- Rev. D. D. Ames - Discourse on Life and Character





the birth of an heir, destroyed his hopes. Disliking the work in the farm he became apprentice to the trade of cabinet making, in a Middlebury shop, and worked at the sawing of table-legs from two-inch planks.<sup>(1)</sup> At the end of the year he left this shop to engage in the same work at Brandon, his home town, but ill health soon interfered. Upon his recovery he attended the Brandon Academy for a year, having come into the possession of a small amount of money.

In 1830 his mother married a Mr. Granger of Canandaigua, Ontario County, New York, and his sister married the son of Mr. Granger, causing the removal of the family, including Stephen to that place. This ends Douglas' connection with Vermont. There seems to be absolutely no indication of exceptional talent.. or great promise in the lad, nothing to mark him as being other than a normal youth, with normal experiences, and normal inheritances. Not a shred of evidence going to show that Douglas, in his life and hopes, was anything more than the average American of his years, but he was that much.

1 - Allen Johnson, Stephen Douglas.

the first of which, together with his  
other life in the field, he seems to have  
to the trade of business making. In a  
shop, and worked at the making of tools from  
two-inch plates. At the end of the year he  
left this shop to return to the home work at  
London, his home town, but did not return in-  
terested. Upon his return he continued the London  
activity for a year, working some time in the possession  
of a small amount of money.  
In 1935 the subject received a Mr. Graham  
of Gene & Sons, Harris County, New York, and his  
subject started the end of Mr. Graham, causing  
the removal of the family, including subject to  
that place. This was subject's connection with  
Vernon. There seems to be subject's no further  
sign of any other family, or great interest in  
the fact, resulting in him as being other than  
normal work, with normal appearance, and normal  
intelligence. But a small amount of evidence points to show  
that subject, in his life and home, was working  
some time the average amount of his years. His



Silent are the influences that thread themselves incessantly about the conscious and unconscious life of man, distracting his periods of self control, when he thinks to chart aright his course; co-ordinating with mystic comprehension innate and acquired tendencies undreamed of. It is not rational to think that one who is to move a nation - be it for good or ill - can rise to manhood without the rapidly forming sources of that power. Because then, we can find no positive external evidences either for or against exceptional development,<sup>(1)</sup> and we have searched the available sources, we are not justified in saying that the Vermont period was without any peculiar significance in his case.

Whether with Douglas the value of surroundings, - of local atmosphere - were influential agencies, more causative, more formative, than the physical inheritances of life, may be very much doubted. Strengthened by a sturdy and vigorous physique, with abundant vitality, he might be contrasted with that other young man, born one year earlier but surviving him twenty-two years, Alexander

1. - Beyond perhaps a tendency to debate and take political sides in his school life, at Brandon.

...and the influence that ...  
...involvement in ...  
...life of ...  
...to ...  
...with ...  
...It is ...  
...not ...  
...- ...  
...with ...  
...power. ...  
...external ...  
...development ...  
...we are not ...  
...the ...  
...to ...

...with ...  
...- ...  
...more ...  
...of ...  
...by ...  
...with ...  
...with ...  
...two ...



H. Stephens, of Georgia, a chronic invalid, never weighing more than ninety pounds. Both men were about five feet in height, but one of great physical power, wears himself out at forty-eight, the other of preternaturally delicate organization, lives to be seventy-one, to die as Douglas - in full harness. Both men enter Congress at the same session, and stand together in many a fight - chiefest of which may be named the Kansas-Nebraska struggle - one to become a Presidential candidate, and supported by the other: both to become for a decade, after 1850, the most able and prominent men of their sections, but not rivals: one to die in defense of the Union - the other to become Vice-President of the Confederate States, and, at the close of the War to go on in a career of unusual brilliance for nearly twenty years.

The physical inheritance of Douglas seems to sum up, in large measure, his debt to the past, so far as he was concerned. Neither strong intellectuality nor noticeable morality suggest themselves by any positive evidence. Whether the peculiarity of the Vermont that he knew had in any way

W. Stoughton, of Virginia, a thorough invalid, never  
weighing more than ninety pounds. Both men were  
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solves by any possible evidence. Whether the pe-  
culiarity of the Vermont life has been met in any way



This Ordinance was the foundation of our Territorial Government, and upon whatever subject it treats, must be regarded in the history of the States carved out of it, as absolute law, but even more than this, it serves as a precedent of the highest value in the discussion of those problems ever breaking over man's onward progress. We draw attention to the following clauses:-

"Be it ordained by the United States, in Congress Assembled . . . . to provide for the establishment of States, and permanent government therein, and for their admission to a share in the Federal Councils on an equal footing with the original States, at as early periods as may be consistant with the general interest;" <sup>1</sup> . . . .

"the navigable waters leading into the Mississippi and St. Lawrence, and the carrying places between the same, shall be common highways, and forever free, as well to the inhabitants of the said Territory, as to the citizens of the United States, and those of any other States that may be admitted into the Confederacy, without any tax, inpost, or duty therefor." <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> North West Ordinance, 1787. (Closing of section on formation of Government, duties, etc)

<sup>2</sup> *ibid* - Article 4.

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and those of any other States that may be admitted  
into the Republic, without any tax, impost, or  
duty thereon." 2



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called out susceptibilities, can hardly be said with any convincing force, but Douglas was a man of boundless political ambition, and of almost resistless vital force. Whether transplanting to other scenes was the essential and the determining factor in the sources of Douglas' life work, or whether these lay deeper, in the nature of the man himself, constitutes a problem to which we shall give some attention. The world into which Douglas came, and in which he worked - physical, political, spiritual, must therefore be briefly brought to mind. It is possible to assume that Douglas was under the influence of the Vermont scenery as the youths of all mountainous districts have been, and to have imbibed some of that atmosphere of freedom that was so much in evidence at the annual meetings of the Rutland County Historical Society. There it was recited that Vermont was "

"A land of rock and rill and tree,

A chosen home of Liberty;

Whose mountains grand with wooded crest,

The foot of slave hath never pressed," (1)

but does the record of her most famous son bear

1. - H. B. Spofford, in Rutland Co. Historical Society Collection, p 93.





the stamp of one born among the liberty-loving hills! Indeed we are compelled to doubt whether Douglas carried away with him from Vermont much of the vitalizing moral force that was characteristic of the Green Mountain Boys, of '76 though possessing equally with them a patriotic enthusiasm. He would have listened with a ready and eager ear to the call to arms, and his sense of patriotism would have been deeply stirred. Nothing in his later history could discount this claim, and it may be that Vermont, in hill and story and lake, may have had her way with him, but the nature of the boy is as yet unresponsive to the subtler influences of life.

Let us pass now to the Brandon of Rutland County, and to Vermont, into which Douglas came and in which he spent the first seventeen years of his life. Let us find what the conditions were, what the people were doing and thinking.





## V E R M O N T .

## (a) Physical.

The characteristics of the surface of Vermont are too familiar to need detailed mention, but their possible significance should be born in mind. This is especially true as we recall the physical features of Illinois, the State of Douglas' adoption. Was there a more direct appeal to Douglas in the plains and prairies - in the broad expanses of territory, seeming to invite settlement and agricultural organization - than in the hills and valleys and rapidly flowing streams of Vermont?

The Green Mountains running the whole length of the State and passing through Rutland County, with peaks towering over two thousand feet in the air; the beautiful valleys with as fine a verdure as New England grows; the Rivers, Mill, and Otter, running through the village of Brandon; the Connecticut River, and the beautiful Lake Champlain, some distance to the East and to the West!





Douglas must have climbed the hills, must have many times gazed far to the Westward, piercing in his imagination beyond the Adirondacks and wondering what was there, perhaps asking himself, would he ever be able to penetrate to the lands beyond! Who knows but that he hoped to - perhaps resolved to - at least proved not averse when the favoring opportunity came to pass beyond these home scenes.

(b) Statistical.

With the statistics of the State we are but little concerned save to show that from 1810 to 1830 Vermont, in the technical sense, was not a frontier State.

The population of Vermont was			
	1810	1820	1830
Population Vt.	217204	235749	280715
" Rutland Co.	29487	29975	31295
" Brandon	1375	1495	1946

The inferences to be drawn from these figures for our purposes are:

- (1) That the State of Vermont from 1810-30

Another must have climbed the hill, and must have seen  
 the same scene. It is the same scene, whether in his  
 imagination beyond the Adirondacks and whether  
 what was there, whether seeing it, would be  
 over as soon as he returned to the land below.  
 The house but that he hoped to - perhaps received  
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(b) Stationed.

With the station of the State water  
 and this concerned him to show that from 1910  
 to 1915 Vermont, in the technical sense, was not  
 a frontier place.

The population of Vermont was

1910	1900	1890
Population of Vermont	232,449	232,449
Population of Vermont	232,449	232,449
Population of Vermont	232,449	232,449
Population of Vermont	232,449	232,449

The information is not drawn from these figures for  
 one purpose only:

(1) That the State of Vermont from 1910-15



was advanced considerably beyond the frontier stage of settlement. The density of population for the state for the years under consideration was twenty-four - twenty-six - thirty-one per square mile; giving the State a rank of about eight among the States of the Union for density of population.

(2) A comparison of the relative increase of population with the later history of the State shows that with the exception of the decade from 1810 -20 (due to 1812 War) the growth though slow, was normal, and the State may be said to have possessed fairly settled conditions.

(3) That the growth of Brandon town during the period was relatively greater than the growth of the State, being 29% as against the States 22%. This would show that the community in which Douglas lived was only partly in frontier condition, and was thriving in many ways.

to the development along the river sides of the characteristic New England factory - the paper mill, the woolen factories, the fulling mills, the cotton factories, the tanneries, the grist mills, saw mills, etc. Furnishing our own source of power

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(2) A comparison of the relative increase of population with the later history of the state shown that with the exception of the decade from 1810-20 (and to 1850 too) the growth though slow, was normal, and the state may be said to have

possessed fairly settled conditions.

(3) That the growth of population from 1810 to 1850 was relatively greater than the growth of the state, being 32% as against the state 24%. This would show that the country in which people lived was only partly in frontier condition, and was thriving in many ways.



(c)        Agricultural.

Agriculture is the pursuit that occupies the attention of the great majority of the people of Vermont, fully six-sevenths being engaged in this work. Potatoes, oats, corn, hay, wheat, rye, and buckwheat, are the chief products of the farm while sheep raising and wool production form the staple for the foreign market. Dairy products and lumber are also important interests among the people.

(d)        Manufactures.

Manufacturing was beginning to assume a very high rating in the State during the period, pointing to the great position Vermont occupies, in 1840. It will only be necessary here to refer to the development along the river sides of the characteristic New England factory - the paper mills, the woolen factories, the fulling mills, the cotton factories, the tanneries, the grist mills, saw mills, etc. Furnishing her own source of power





in the water-ways; her own fuel in the forests; her own raw material on the farm, under the surface of the earth in iron, copperas, and marble, the State might seem to be well equipped for advancement, but the greater relative superiority in natural resources of the other New England States, and the fact that Vermont did not lie on one of the great high-ways of traffic to the East or the West, made her gain and her position a subordinate one.

From the above brief presentation of facts, and statements we should infer that Vermont was, primarily, an agricultural State, made up of the large or permanent type of farmer, and secondarily, but increasingly, a manufacturing State.

We have almost no evidence going to show that the employments of the people amongst whom Douglas lived exerted any positive influence upon his life, or shaped in any way, the character of his future work. Though surrounded by the farming life of the town of Brandon and daily listening to the farmtalk he had no agricultural leanings - preferring for a time the business of the mechanic, yet we cannot help but feel that Douglas, in those years when he fought in the Halls





of the Nation, for the rights of water-ways, and for the means of developing the interior localities of far away districts, did in his mind turn back to the memories of the scenes of his home town; with its half dozen busy factories, and the running streams that brought value to the place. Other than this kind of speculative evidence, which at most would be only a species of confirmatory influence, the occupations of the people were influentially negative. But the negative influences of his Vermont life were effective. They were strong enough to drive him away from his home town, and to make him see that there was no place for him in Brandon, Not caring for the interests of the community he was glad to go, and his gladness became feverish ambition to push on in his way to the West. Like Greeley, like Stanford, like Rockefeller, like Field, he parted from his old home community to start life under very different circumstances. How much of his later view of Eastern conditions and people are based upon his very limited period of Eastern experience we cannot say, but surely some of it.

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with his half-brother, and the running  
stream that brought water to the place. Other  
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(e) THE PEOPLE.

Under this head we shall briefly indicate the nativity of the Vermont settlers, their political and social thinking, and their attitude toward a westward migration.

A study of the various State, County, and town histories will readily give one the sources of Vermont's pioneer population.

The earliest settlements were made in the middle of the eighteenth century, though Fort Dummer had a few families as early as 1724. Most of these early settlers came from Massachusetts, while some came from Connecticut, and a few from New Hampshire. The Indian Wars and the Revolution naturally kept back the growth of the State and it may be called a frontier state in every sense until about the time of the formation of the Union. After the Revolution we get traces of emigration pouring into the Vermont region from several sections, from Rhode Island and from New York. It is also noticeable that the settlers stay but a short

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time in a place. Mrs. Lois N. Mathews gives three facts of this period as peculiar to Vermont; (1)

First: Heterogeneous character of town population, coming from five states.

Second: The crossing and re-crossing of emigration lines.

Third: The tendency to move two or more times on the part of families coming into Vermont. There was not an original purpose to go to Vermont, and the final settlement would often be the fourth in the wilderness. (2) "But few of the early settlers remained in town (Bloomfield) for any great length of time." (3)

We find in the accounts of travelers in the early part of the nineteenth century that Vermont was conspicuous for an unconventional type of thinking, radical, in the sense that there was great disregard for the verities of life as taught by the Puritans, and from any strict Puritan point of view, loose as regards their educational, religious, and moral ideas. (4) Vermont might be called the

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(1) - Lois K. Mathews; The expansion of New England. 1909. Chs. IV - V - VI-

(2) - ~~ibid~~ - pp 146-7.

(3) - Vermont Historical Gazettier I, 950. William Burbank - Bloomfield.

(4) - Timothy Dwights Travels II, 456-75.





least Puritan among the New England States- and most responsive to Pioneer forms of life. Her people preferred politics, and the law, to religion and the school. This for our purpose, is perhaps the most significant fact in the survey, accounting in part for the tendency in Douglas to enter into larger opportunities along the lines of law and politics. The material and spittitual conditions of the people were unsettled, and their character was not as sterling and strong as in other New England states. This partly from the fact, that the original New England settlers had become located and gained their holdings in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut, and that those who were pushed out towards the frontier were the less fortunate ones. This is not to be taken in a too absolute sense, but it is characteristic of the major part of frontier settlements, and the restless and dissatisfied will invariably be found at the front edges of civilization. It was also a meeting place for those emigrants from several directions - a kind of New England melting pot, from which emerges the western politician. Illinois especially, received





more emigrants from Vermont than from any other New England state, and their predilection was politics and law - not ministry. Here, then, seems to be the most real and vital relation binding Douglas to his Vermont home. We can very quickly perceive that had Douglas been born a generation earlier he would have joined the ranks of the Pioneers, but in his day he moves westward in company with the third, not the first wave, of emigrants - that wave which bore forward the founders of commonwealths, the organizers of territories, the legislators of the people, and the makers of their laws. This was the wave that carried Douglas to his first stopping point in the westward course, the Genesee County of Western New York - Canandaigua.

The political thinking of Vermont had always been independent (1) but from the time of her admission as the fourteenth state of the Union in 1791, she settled down into the more normal positions of her New England sister States. The career of the Green Mountain Boys, of Ethan Allen and Stark,

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(1) - For evidence we have her attitude in Revolutionary War, and the period of her Constitutional differences with New York and with Congress, and her early State formation, indicating a desire and ability to carry on her own government, and even to dicker with foreign nations.





were the tales the boys of Douglas' day were brought up on, and the more recent struggles of the navy on the waters of Lake Champlain, off Plattsburg, in 1814, were a great source for patriotic display. Cyril Carpenter, of Rutland (1) cites the instance of an effect produced upon a church audience by the reading of a notice, in the midst of the sermon, that a battle was on at Plattsburg. The preacher at once closed the service and called for enlistment. Twenty-six men enlisted and marched off soon to be met by the news that Plattsburg was won.

Henry Hall, of Rutland, in an historical address at the Centennial Celebration of Rutland County, 1881, said, "Few inland Counties have such a wealth of historical material . . . . the wars of England and France, from William III, and Louis XIV, to George III and Louis XV, from Marlboroughs victory at Blenheim to Wolfe's capture of Quebec, from the burning and massacre of Schenectady in 1690 to the burning and massacre of Neshobe (2) and Royalston during the Revolutionary War, so involving English and French colonists and near Indians, causing so many expeditions, scouting parties - war-parties,

(1) - Article Military History Rutland, in Rutland Historical Society collection. Vol I p 23.

(2) - Neshobe, first name of Brandon.





captive parties, raids and counter- raids, through the Lake along our borders, across our territory the fierce struggles and contents with the Yorkers and Tories, the marshalling of forces for the capture of "Ti" in 1775, the presence of British and German troops for weeks in 1777, the history of our forts, the ascent up the Lake of a large British army in 1781, with the wild excitement caused thereby, the Shay-like mob of 1786, etc," (1) which clearly summarized the currents that had gone over Vermont history before her time of Statehood. Out of these things came in good part the influences that shaped the thinking of her citizens, and we can rightly assume that Douglas assimilated the lessons taught and wrought out by his forbears. We would draw from this two controlling facts seen in his later career - his love for his country, and his hatred for England. This later becomes a passion with him, but assumes a larger form, even the hatred of all foreign contact. His boyhood knowledge of England's Indian policy, relative to the United States was fitting ground upon which to plant the far more apparent evidences of such policy to be found in a

(1) Henry Hall - Speech, p 28, Rutland County Historical Society, vol. I





Western planting of the nation. (1)

One more incident to show the early influence of Vermont life upon the public career of Douglas, and that illustrates the permanence in early Vermont history of the "Tavern", for no County in that region but had its towns and "almost every town had its village, and no village was complete in all its parts until it could boast of a church, school house, store, Tavern and black-smith shop . . . . the bar room became alternately the forum, the field of debate on all matters of general interest, the general 'committee room' for the discussion of grave questions." (2)

The tavern of Vermont was an institution of convenience for travelers, more than for the local habitues, and it took the place in influence of the modern newspaper. What was talked of at one town was carried forward and backward to other towns and its local importance impressed itself certainly upon the youth of Douglas, so that he could very easily fall into the habit of using the bar-room as a medium for acquiring information, and also for inculcating his own beliefs, and opinions. No poli-

(1) - Douglas' grandfather fought in the Revolutionary War.

(2) - George H. Beoman, The old Time Tavern, in Rutland County Collection, Vol I, pp 78-9.





tician has ever used more advantageously the tavern, bar-room, or corner saloon in pressing his political theories and plans. This must not be taken in the modern sense. To Vermont he owes his first acquaintance with this popular medium of influence, a medium that every Statesman of the West in those days made full use of.

It is interesting to note that the "sobriety" of the tavern atmosphere was good because of the "Puritanism of early settlers from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island". The tavern was an undoubted necessity of the time, because of lack of hotel accommodations, and the general need for a social central meeting place. But the prominence of the tavern with its associations suggest the frontier state rather than the Puritan society. More over, in the testimony of travelers of that time, comparing Vermont with Connecticut, dwelt upon the turbulence and the low moral tone existing in the former region. Churches even failed to call new ministers upon the death or departure of the old in very many instances - and the reason given - the community hardly felt they could afford it.<sup>(1)</sup>

(1) - See Mrs. Mathews Expansion of New England.





It was in fact, not a case of poverty, for their poverty did not exceed that of the Puritans, when they established their churches and schools in Massachusetts, but it was far more a matter of growing indifference to theological concerns in the face of material needs, difficulties and opportunities. Here might arise the question that will come up often in our minds as we trace the careers of Douglas, did the Puritan lose his religious and moral force as he cut his way through the forests, battled with the Red-skins, bartered with the fur traders, co-operated with the Colonists, and compromised with conditions that he might both live and grow and rule? Vermont was settled by Puritan descendants, but the religious tone of the State of 1830-40 was very much less sincere in its observances than the Massachusetts or Connecticut, of even the same period. It would seem to be a non-religious atmosphere. Douglas passed through the most susceptible time of his life amidst these changing circumstances, this lowering of religious sincerity, which unquestionably had a goodly share in the fruitage of his days. The Brandon of his early years had





its religious atmosphere, with its three churches Congregational, Baptist, and Methodist, but he seems not to have had the normal training of a Puritan child, or to have taken any part in the Church worship. Did the premature death of his father cut him off from such influence? At any rate we know that he never connected himself with any religious organization. This in itself was not an unknown thing even among prominent men in Puritan communities, but it was exceptional.

The town of Brandon was an old community, first named Neshobe, whose town patent reached back to October 20 - 1761, and the name was changed to Brandon, October 20th, 1784, when it was organized as a town. "Pitching" before purchasing was the early practice of those who would settle, and it was the Vermont frontier town during the Revolution. Its location is in the Northern part of Rutland County, - about 16 miles from Rutland, 16 miles from Middlebury, 16 miles from Lake Champlain, and about 30 miles from Ticonderoga. (1)

(1) Vermont state Gazetteer.





## CONCLUSION.

Summarizing those features of Douglas' Vermont life which seem of most note, we may mention:

### I. THE PERSONAL INFLUENCES.

- (a) Family. Death of father in infancy, and the prominence in public work of grandfather. Removal with mother and sister to the farm of his uncle, his early school education, and the disappointment and failure of his uncle to give him a college career. This increased his desire to move from Brandon.
- (b) His entry into manual labor, and the illness that changed his life. Removal to New York.

### II. IMPERSONAL INFLUENCES.

- (a) Physical features of the State - negative and unattractive to Douglas.
- (b) Character of the population, changing, restless, with non-puritan features rather prominent.





- (c) Occupations. Agricultural and manufacturing.
- (d) Historic influences, giving the patriotic tone, and at the same time instilling certain prejudices, later developing into hatred of foreign nations.
- (e) Tendency of people to be interested in politics and law.
- (f) Unusual attitude of the spirit of independence on the part of the people.
- (g) Tendency of Vermonters or settlers in Vermont in 1830 to migrate westward.





PART III.

STEPHEN DOUGLAS IN ILLINOIS.

1833 - 1843.

[ The chief authorities upon this phase of the subject are the three historians of the State - Ford, a contemporary, Davidson and Stubb, Brown; the biographies of Lincoln and Allen Johnson; the American State Papers, Vols. V & VI; Fergusson's History of Illinois; and the Historical Collections, annotated by various.]

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STEPHEN DOUGLAS IN ILLINOIS.

The present part is to be concerned with a brief sketch of the main facts in the purely State career of Douglas. Emphasis upon this decade of Douglas' life would but indifferently well give us the key note to his greatest purposes, and for the reason that his advance and the nature of his work is at first too often the part of the accidental favorite, too much the character of the ambitious office seeker. There is a great deal of the real Douglas to be learned in this period, but it is fundamental, rather of temperament and constitution, than of settled political policy capable of Nationalization. Moreover a thorough grasp upon the period would involve the careful perusal of source material available only in Illinois collections.

It is then our purpose to select those facts that point towards a possible larger experience, and which indicate the elements making for personal and political success.

The life of Douglas in New York covers nearly three years - not unimportant we know, from the recital of the tales that reach us - emphasizing more the part he was destined to play on a larger





stage. He pursued his education at the Academy and became a prominent participant in the school debates, and it was here that he first learned to love and admire the personality of Andrew Jackson. Many a forensical battle he had in his defense. Canandiagua saw the adherence of Douglas placed in the Democratic party and from that time, about 1832, the loyalty of the man to Jackson and the democratic party remains steadfast.

It is perhaps more than mere coincidence that the first political act of Douglas to bring him into public fame, was the rather bold attempt to defend the President, Andrew Jackson, before the citizens of Morgan County. Looking forward ten years to his first public speech of importance in Congress the one which brought him acclaim from many, we find it to be again a defense of Jackson, for the removal of an unjust fine. In both instances Douglas was fighting the expressed voice of the people, (1) but in the interests of a popular hero, and such was the personal magic of his power that his success was quick and spontaneous.

The importance of this introduction of

(1) - In the first case the removal of deposits from banks was unpopular, and in the second case, the defense was under a Whig administration, though a popular vote would have supported him.





Douglas to the political world of State and then of Nation is very marked, for as Elisha of old passes to his great task under the mantle of Elijah, so does Douglas step forth into the arena of politics clothed in the mantle of Jackson. Whatever opinion may be held as to the value or ill of Jackson's administrative acts and of his familiar judgments, no question can be raised as to the popularity of his Western services. Born a decade before the Revolutionary War in a pioneer County of North Carolina, now Tennessee, a soldier at thirteen, in the Revolution, Republic prosecutor on the frontier, first representative of Tennessee to Congress - following year senator, and then for six years judge of the State Supreme Court of Tennessee. Later in the 1812 War, against the advice and command of the secretary of War Jackson held together his troops and later lead them South to destroy the power of the Creek Indians at the Battle of Horse Shoe Bend, opening up an immense tract of land for settlement. Proceeding on his own responsibility he overcame the British at Mobile and Pensacola and marched to New Orleans. Here opposed by twelve thousand

rights and the possibilities of the common people.





Troops of Wellington, who had fought at Waterloo, Jackson, with six thousand troops, well protected by breastworks repulsed the British attack with a loss of but eight men, to the British loss of twenty-six hundred - and won New Orleans. In 1818 he restored order in the Spanish region of Florida, and the following year became its first territorial governor. In 1823 he was again in the Senate, and in 1824 was tied with John Quincy Adams for the Presidency. In 1828 and 1832 he was elected to the Presidency of the United States.

Such a career had not been known to the people of America before. Its great significance was that it first represented to the people, in a very concrete way, the possibilities of the new democracy rising in the West. Such a career, such an evidence of personal power, would at that time, have been impossible in the regions east of the Alleghenies - and its success was one of the proofs as well as one of the reasons, for the Nationalism of the West. Jackson's administration was open to most severe criticism, but it had its merits in the strong assertion given to the nation of the rights and the possibilities of the common people.





Such was the man under whose administration it was the lot of Douglas to first venture into public life and the principles of Jackson were taken over unquestioned, by their now protagonist. To defend this hero was hardly more than to appeal to the sympathies of his hearers, but upon the present occasion Douglas succeeded far beyond his hopes and established himself as a Jeffersonian democrat.

The dissaffection of the Illinois populace with the affairs at Washington, was over the seeming unwillingness of Jackson to stand for those measures thought to be of peculiar advantage for the West - the perpetuation of the United States bank - the appropriations for Western improvements, as the channel of the Wabash, and the Chicago Harbor. His opposition to these measures lost him many friends in the West, but his reason - "that the Bank was a gigantic electioneering machine" - was ere long sadly remembered, when the fallacy of the state banks stood revealed.

The desire for the creation of banks naturally spread rapidly, when it was thought that farmers could borrow money to operate their farms





and that canals and railroads could be cut and built. The banks became the depositories of the moneys raised by sale of the State bonds; as Specie had to be paid for public lands, the notes of the banks were brought in and presented for specie payment - causing such an outflow of specie money that the end rapidly came and the panic of 1837 furnished the climax to this frazzled financiering.

The democrats of Illinois had been led to support this State bank policy, because of the practical benefit supposed to inhere in it for the poorer people, but the officers of the banks and the wealthy stock-holders were Whigs, so it was not long after the doubtful value of state banks came to be seen, that the democratic leaders joined in the cry against the "Rag-ocracy", and the "rag-barons".

Mastery of the principles of finance had never been an accomplishment of Andrew Jackson, and it was to constitute but a minor fact in the career of Douglas. For a while he worked upon the love of the people for a hero - gave them to think that while Jackson struck at the monopoly of a





U. S. bank, he yet favored the local banks. He was flayed for his position by the Whig paper, "The Patriot," but this served merely to bring him more prominently before the state.

Douglas seemed in no way to be stirred in those early days by the great constitutional questions that were resounding in the Halls of Congress. The eloquence of Webster, and the logic of his larger plea seems to have awakened no responsive chords in his breast. The New England of Webster and the South Carolina of Hayne, were nothing to him. Personal affairs begin to surround his life, and the current that was to carry him to his future field of labor was fast rising beneath him. He was in a great highway of travel and in 1833 he left his New York home for the West.

Douglas was undoubtedly anxious to enter the profession of law and so made endeavors to complete his law course, but the thought of spending four years in preparation - upon the slender resources of his mother - finally drove him to seek an opportunity where conditions were more favorable. Stopping





at Cleveland he became acquainted with Sherlock Andrews an attorney, who induced him to try his fortune there. Andrews gave him full use of his law office and library and Douglas resolved to study for a year, but malarial fever laid him low for four months, after which, with forty dollars in his pocket, he pressed on, first to Portsmouth, then to Cincinnati, then to Louisville, and finally to St. Louis. In each of these large towns he failed to earn a lucrative wage, and the conviction was borne in upon him that he would stand a better chance in some smaller town. Hearing of the settlement of Jacksonville in the winter of 1833 he went up the Illinois River and gained his first impressions of his future home. The characteristic Illinois scenery - its river banks, fringed with scattered bits of timber, and its wide stretches of waving prairie grass, with expanses of country as free and open as the heavens - these made an impression, by contrast with earlier scenes. Douglas, in his Jonesboro debate of later years, with Lincoln, said of this period, "I found my mind liberalized and my opinions enlarged when I got on these broad prairies,





with only the Heavens to bar my vision, instead of having them circumscribed by the little ridges that surrounded the valley where I was born. (1)

Opportunity for growth and expansion over broad, unending areas touched his imagination rather than the beauty of the hills, while the valleys between the hills seemed to be examples of the cramping, crushing, narrowing influence of the small areas.

One dollar and twenty-five cents would not carry a person far in those days, and the advise of a friend sent him forward to Pekin, but his funds gave out before he reached there and he was taken in hand by kind hearted farmers at Merdosia. To teach school seemed the only outlet for Douglas and through accident he became well known to the Winchester town folk. (2) Befriended again he was enabled to secure forty pupils for a period of three months schooling at three dollars apiece. He formed a Lyceum, and encouraged public speaking and debating, again holding forth in advocacy of everything Jacksonian. The autobiography, quoted by Johnson, in his "Douglas" places the reading of the debates.

(1) - Abraham Lincoln's Works: National Edition, Vol III, pp 372-3.

(2) - Through serving as a Clerk at a public auction sale of personal effects.





in the Constitutional Convention of 1787, the Federalist, the Works of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, to this Winchester period. He also practised law and in March left for Jacksonville, where he was admitted to the bar. Not until Douglas began his life in Jacksonville can he be said to have had any definite conception of what his work was to be, but very quickly he beheld himself settling to his life work, law and politics. The life of the town suited him, and he was soon in good enough circumstances to take his part in the co-operations of society. He seemed to seldom approach any matter from the purely theoretical side. He was practical, both from necessity and by nature. To get his daily bread, and to cultivate the good will of his associates - his first constituency - became almost identical tasks, and he soon developed great aptness along these lines. In those times the Country side formed a far more vital factor in politics than it does today, and the Saturday gatherings of the people in the towns, to barter and to discuss politics, were significant facts beyond what a modern can understand. Douglas did not at first attend these meet-





ings with any conscious knowledge or belief that they had real importance for him, but rather that the social and political instincts of his nature readily responded and warmed to the simple and homely greetings and conversations of the people. He felt the pleasure that comes to one who moves upon a plane of equality with his comrades and friends, and he here learned much of common honesty and also of common meanness. He saw the generosity of men when acting in a mass, and he instinctively appropriated both the virtues<sup>and the vices</sup> of his time. In all this common democracy of the early West there was as much to shock the most refined natures, as there was to wall out the simple and strong habits of life. The society that gives a prominent place to bar-rooms and gambling, is often more than crude and rough - is often very loose and criminal in its manifestations, but the bar-room of the early Western type was something that it can never again be in this country - a center where strong men met and talked politics. In a day when the corner grocery furnished liquors, and men of inner power, like Lincoln dispensed them, the problem of morality was opera-





tive - but on a more primitive plane of civilization. Douglas quickly and naturally became an habitue at all the gatherings of the people - one of them in what they thought and what they did and how they did it - and never scrupled..

Here for the first time - when he was beginning his practise of law - Douglas shows the qualities that are to mark him as an exceptional man. He is learning the secret of social co-operation by which fulcrum he is to raise himself to high political distinction. Each one to assist the other, as a common means for individual and collective advancement, without class distinctions, was the secret for much of the Western state building.

In 1835 - at the age of twenty-two, Douglas was elected States attorney, for the first judicial district of Illinois, defeating John J. Hardin, a useful and experienced lawyer. The defeat of Hardin had been brought about by his personal enemies and through passing in the legislature, over the veto of the Governor, a bill to make the office





elective by Legislature, rather than appointive by the Governor. Thus Douglas gets his first public office - not at the hands of the people - but through the jockeying of political legislators.

There seems to be but little question that Douglas proved himself competent to preform the difficult duties of the legal circuit rider. (1) He easily became the center of attraction at all the sessions, but because of his social rather than his legal qualities. He was making those acquaintences that were later to stand him in good stead.

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- (1) - J. C. Conkling: Recollections of the Bench and Law of Central Illinois -Fergus Historical Series, Number 22.

"There were but few cases in the courts that require an extroirdanary amount of learning to manage. There was no necessity for the application of the rule Stare decisis, for there were few or no decisions to stand upon. Good sound common sense, the gift of speech, a mixture of natural shrewdness with politics, and a regular attendance upon courts in circuit, were the principle requisites for success". p 38





Douglas early showed a strong belief in the power of organization. When he successfully carried through the attempt to have party nominations made by party conventions. Previous to this effort there had appeared many candidates for the same offices in each of the parties. The desire to hold office had become a passion in the West, and was more and more threatening the party success. To determine upon the most suitable candidates in the party for the various offices and then to unite the whole strength of the party upon these were Douglas' schemes. It is a striking commentary upon his political sagacity that in spite of the popular hostility towards his plan among party leaders, he carried it through, first the County nominating convention, and second, the district convention, naming the Presidential electors for 1836. And though there is no evidence to show that Douglas was working for himself in all this, he did secure the nomination as representative to his state legislature, and after a very hard canvass - won the election. Thus had this man won two very distinct victories, - one to install the unpopular, but more





systematic party convention, even forcing it upon the Whigs - and second to secure for the democrats the complete control of Morgan county, hitherto a Whig stronghold.

This work of Douglas serves to show his strong loyalty to party interests, though he proves himself not a slave to outworn methods. At the same time his interest in the policy of union of effort, of concentration as a means to effective results, rapidly developed.

In December of 1836 Douglas took his seat in the state legislature, memorable for its ruinous policy of internal improvements, which untimately ruined the finances of Illinois. Douglas had a share in this work, but was himself very much opposed to the extravagant expenditures which were finally proposed and adopted. The members of the legislature were undoubtedly co-erced into supporting some very liberal scheme for developing the state and it was soon seen that the real question would be, how to keep down the appropriations to a safe figure. Douglas, while not in any sense an





experienced business man, yet showed himself capable of a good exercise of common sense. He feared this craze for expenditure. At the start then of the session Douglas advanced the following as his plea: (1)

- "A Bill to provide - In order to
1. - For the completion of the Illinois and Michigan Canal.
  2. - For the construction of a railroad from the termination of said canal to the mouth of the Ohio River.
  3. - For the construction of a railroad from Quincy, on the Mississippi, Eastward to the State line, in the direction of the Wabash and Erie Canal.
  4. - For the improvement of the navigation of the Illinois and Wabash river.
  5. - For making surveys and estimates of such other works as may be considered of general utility."

In addition state was to construct and own these improvements and pay for same by loans and by sale of lands.

This bill would have been a large undertaking for the people had it passed, but it was





the acme of economy beside the bill that was actually passed on Feb. 27 - 1837. In place of the two railroads, eight were to be constructed and work to start on all of them at once. Over ten millions were appropriated and when the population was less than one half a million. In order to satisfy everybody, two hundred thousand dollars were granted for the parts of the state untraversed by railroads.

This outrageous session of legislature involved the reputation of the State and in 1840 the act was repealed, but the State was burdened by a debt of fourteen millions.

Douglas opposed this reckless legislation up to the point where he believed it was legitimate for him to act upon personal grounds. When it came to the voting, he voted according to instructions, for the bill. He was in good company for Abraham Lincoln voted for the bill, as did also James Shields, McClernand, Minian W. Edwards, Augustus C. French and the speaker - James Semple. John J. Hardin was the most prominent opponent.

From the very first of his public career Douglas had lent his support to the development of





the Country, and there is much significance in this instance of his sensing the wishes of the people, but endeavoring to restrain their fanaticism. He was forced to pass through the period when the general sentiment of the people was for repudiation of the debt, a dishonor that the state was only rescued from by the sterling services of Governor Ford, and the support of an earnest moral element.

The brief service of Douglas in the State Legislature was marked by one praiseworthy act.

As chairman of the Committee on Petitions he received the petition of one to be divorced from his wife. These petitions had to be addressed to the Legislature and granted or refused. Douglas saw the iniquity of the method and at once introduced a resolution "that it is unconstitutional, and foreign to the duties of the legislature, for the Legislature to grant bills of divorce." By a vote of 53 to 32 the system of legislated bills of divorce was stopped.

The session was not closed before the Sangamon County delegation, headed by Lincoln,





had proved successful in getting the capital of the State removed from Vandalia to Springfield. The log-rolling necessary to secure this piece of legislation probably has few equals.

Just how much of a part Lincoln had in this matter, or whether he came closely into touch with Douglas as the head of the Morgan County delegation is not revealed unto a later generation, but it would be interesting and instructive to know. The evidence seems to favor Douglas' opposition to the removal but not over strongly. (1)

In April of 1837, Douglas resigned his seat in the Legislature, probably because of lack of means to keep up his position, and to accept a far more lucrative office, of Register of the Land Office at Springfield.

This position gave Douglas the opportunity to associate with the leaders among the state politicians, time to mix with friends now and old at Willis' drug-store or the American Tavern — learn-

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(1) — The fact that at a banquet of celebration held in Springfield, over the success of the effort, Douglas was present, constitutes the nature of the proof.





ing the old, old secret of winning the hearts as the means for political success. To have spent his spare moments in study or in reading would never have suggested itself to Douglas. He was a pioneer statesman who read the book of human nature unreflectively and placed high value upon the daily impressions that sprang from human associations. To learn that which was fundamental to the man by giving and accepting confidences, exchanging the philosophies of everyday practise, and indulging the small but wonderfully centered idealism of the frontiersman, were to Douglas, the greatest joys and perhaps the most suggestive methods for the accumulation of knowledge.

But above all the position as Register of the Land Office may be reckoned as the beginning of an interest that was to go on and steadily enlarge its field of operation. It was an office that was well filled by Douglas. He faithfully performed its duties with an energy that must have proved nearly equal to the demands of the buyers.<sup>(1)</sup> The requirements of the position were not exacting, from the standpoint of technical knowledge, need-

(1) J. M. Cutts - Constitutional and Party Question





ing only an acquaintance with the system of public surveys and an understanding of the methods of sale. The requirements in regard to the personal factor were undoubtedly severe and the trials of the land agent as he dealt with the heterogeneous assembly of purchasers, land sharks, schemers, squatters and real settlers, must have been of a very difficult and even dangerous character.

The sale of public lands was, in the days of Douglas' incumbency, of the office of agent, far more popular than when public sales first began about the opening of the century. It was possible at that time to buy only in 640 acre sections, at two dollars per acre, requiring a cash payment of twelve hundred and eighty dollars. This was not only an unreasonable amount of land for a single purchaser to buy, but it was an impossible amount of money for any but a well to do farmer to advance. Hence the land sales by the government were very slow at first. Private companies could undersell the government. In the course of time the land came to be sold at a cheaper price, one dollar and a quarter per acre, and the minimum amount





a person could buy came to be gradually lessened - to 320 acres - to 160 acres - to 80 acres and finally, when Douglas becomes Register - to 40 acres.<sup>(1)</sup>

At this time, 1837-8, there were ten land offices in Illinois and in the number of acres sold and the amount of money received for same, she ranks ahead of all other public land states.<sup>(2)</sup> During 1837 and 2/3 of 1838, the land office at Springfield, Illinois sold 16,197,606 acres at \$1.25 an acre, making a total of \$202,470.08. The greatest rush at the land office came in the few years before when the first chance was presented to secure the smallest lots, and the Springfield office in the two years of 1835-6 sold nearly a million acres of land bringing into the Treasury about a million and a quarter dollars.<sup>(3)</sup>

Douglas became acquainted with the details of the public land system at first hand and is brought to realize how closely the happiness and the well-fare of the people depends upon the ownership of land. Furthermore he must have noted the part the Government played in the individuals welfare. Here lies a real basis for that ever

(1) American State Papers Vol VII.

(2) Executive Documents. 25 Cong. 3rd. Session.

(3) American State Papers Vol VII. Public Lands.  
Executive Documents. 25 Cong, 2nd. Session.





noticeable passion of Douglas as the years go on, to associate the prosperity of the Country with its territorial expansion, to identify its happiness and freedom from sectionalism with the growth and development of regions reclaimed from the Indian and the buffalo. The land question had come to assume the chief place in the Western thought and the relations of parties to the question was all important. How far was the Government going to assist the settler in improving the value of his land by bringing him nearer to a market? Out of the distribution of property among settlers or purchasers, out of the adjustment of claims among squatters, out of the co-operation of this frontier stock, come the great political, constitutional, legal and social struggles of the generation preceeding the Civil War. And Douglas had now taken his first fundamental step towards an adequate conception of the nature of these pressing issues. There could hardly be a better training school for one destined to be a potent voice in shaping the direction of this movement and it will be the object of this Thesis to discover how far





Douglas led and how wisely. Here at least he met men and confronted their native passions, and here he learned the manner of control.

Douglas was a born fighter, but a fighter of sense and for a purpose. He had great courage and loved to be in the thick of a contest, but he wanted to feel that it was a fight that counted and that would put ground beneath his feet. Though this seems to be indefinite at first the persistency of the man in bringing forward the victories of the past as the platforms of the future suggests the presence of an interior logic that was no small element in his success.

In 1837 the Democrats of the State had decided that the Convention system was good, and necessary for the success of the party. Douglas as the foremost early champion of the system had continually been called upon to speak in its defense. The whole movement for a reorganization of the party was an insurgent policy, and Douglas was the chief insurgent. He was appointed on the "Committee of Thirty" to revise the party machinery - to urge the convention system - and to press forward the issues serving to unite the party factions. The





convention met - and Douglas received the party nomination for representative to the National Congress. The only 14 out of 35 counties were represented in the convention by delegates, the system had carried in the Northern district of Illinois and this was followed by the State Democratic Convention which put out a complete state ticket.

The Whigs had now nominated John J. Stuart as the rival candidate for Congress - an able man both physically and mentally - and the campaign that followed up and down the state was only less remarkable than the Lincoln-Douglas campaign of 1858. Douglas and Stuart canvassed the state together and they seemed to endure equally well the rigors of a campaign that involved six speeches a week for five months in a land of very meagre accommodations. Once only in this time did it become necessary for Stuart to thrash his opponent and to mortify his growing sense of importance by conveying him around the square with his head under his arm.

However, the result justified the confidence of the Democrats in their standard-bearer





for Douglas lacked but thirty-five votes out of a total of thirty-six thousand, of being elected. The Whigs had naturally looked for a large Stuart majority, as Harrison had carried the district in 1836 by over three thousand votes.

Objections were loudly made at the time of the unauthorized and assumed leadership of a few speaking for the whole - and the procedure of the Convention was pronounced sadly undemocratic. This was very true and had the action not issued in ultimate success and become a party of the orthodox system, it would have been recorded as the effect of a dissatisfied minority to gain control. But all movements have to start with a few supporters and many of them that succeed, owe it to the brilliance or the energy of the leaders, rather than the inherent merit of their plans. The essence of party politics always has been and always will be, leadership - and campaigns are more often won or lost through the influence of personality than through any other cause. Douglas had already learned this lesson and every argument that he used was launched to reach and shape some personal choice.





And he did not leave the matter there, but sought through social converse in homes, on the street, in the saloon or with men at their work to enforce an allegiance through friendship that would prove impervious to attack. Here rested the grounds for his first great successes and we shall find that as the larger opportunities arise the earlier lessons are not to be forgotten or laid aside.

It is also worthy of note that Douglas was becoming more than a local politician, that from the time he defended Jackson upon a financial policy, he kept in close touch with national life, and now he gives himself to the defense of the unpopular financial policy of Martin Van Buren. Van Buren had won the election on a Democratic ticket in 1836 by a large majority over the Whig candidate, Harrison, but the financial panic of '37 made his administration as unpopular, as it was able. He proposed the independent-treasury scheme, separating the Government from all State banks. For a time this caused Van Buren's standing in Illinois to suffer an eclipse, but Douglas spoke everywhere for him and endeavored to rally the Democrats to stand





by their President. It was a party loyalty that moved him, but it was the message of a sound and sane financial system that he urged. At various times and more particularly in the Presidential campaign of 1840 Douglas spoke for safe and careful handling of the nation's resources. This was the famous fight of Wm. Henry Harrison of "Tippecanoe", a Westerner whose deeds were by no means insignificant, and of the peculiarly heroic type that appealed to the great majority. Harrison and Tyler defeated Van Buren, carrying every Northern State except New Hampshire and, thanks to Stephen Douglas, Illinois voted the whole Democratic ticket. To anyone familiar with the history of these times in the West - with motives and the currents that carry men along to action - with the intense sympathies manifested for one of their own kind who is fighting their battle with the hatred of the frontiersman for Eastern financiers and their associations, however false, to such, this achievement of Douglas is richly suggestive of a future leadership that will be fearless and patriotic.





Douglas was now rapidly passing to the control of the Democratic machinery of the State, becoming Chairman of the State Central Committee. This in less than seven years since he first walked into the region, a poor and unknown youth. The conduct of the Stuart and the Van Buren campaigns represent between them a period of twelve months almost daily speaking. He had to meet the ablest men of that day in the West as Stuart, Hardin, Duncan, Ewing, and Lincoln, and from all these contests he emerged with honors at least even. As a ready debater and orator no man in Illinois had a greater reputation in 1840, and to this fame he added the power of strong executive, and administrative talent. He was now known as the "Little Giant" (1) and his physical powers of endurance seemed truly to merit the title.

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(1) - The term "Little Giant" was probably first applied in America, to Alexander Hamilton - who was below medium height - 5 ft. 7 in., but he was never extensively known by that pseudonym.





The next stage in the career of Stephen Douglas has considerable bearing upon his political preferment in the State but does not shed much information for our purposes. In November, 1840 - Douglas became Secretary of State to Governor Carlin in partial reward of his services through the last campaign. The office also served the double purpose of replenishing his purse and enabling him to devote himself more exclusively to his political desires. This office, had until now, been held by the Whigs and the incumbrent had not seen fit to relinquish the position, at the Governor's request. The stand taken by Governor Carlin was simply that the office was largely one of confidential nature and it was essential that the holder should incline to the same political faith. The stand of the Secretary was that the office was one created by the Legislature and to be filled by the Governor only when it was vacant. The Senate adopted a resolution declaring no vacancy. The matter was then brought before the Circuit Court in the case of "The People, ex relatione John A. McClernand vs A. P. Field" and the opinion was





declared by Judge Breese confirming the power of the Governor to remove and to appoint. The appeal to the Supreme Court resulted in the reversal of the decree of lower court. (Douglas was one of the counsel presenting argument for claimant.) The decision was looked upon as partisan, the Whig majority endeavoring to retain a Whig officer. Under the influence of the Lobby, "Lord Coke's Assembly", the Legislature threatened to interfere and declare the office vacant, when the incumbent, Mr. Field, resigned. Douglas was at once appointed. The ethics of the situation could hardly have been a matter of great consideration since Douglas had taken so prominent a part in the overthrow of Field's tenure. He was right in his legal attitude, but lacking in a fine sense of political honor. Politics was the great game of the day and hardly a question of importance arose that did not bear some relation to the rule of the parties. The Western man had come from the East with great dissatisfaction at the injustice heaped upon him by those who had exercised the voice of authority at home. Yet he had a keen





sense of the practical value of the Easterner's weapon, and secretly he meant to go no further West than just far enough to grasp securely this same power - and human nature would prompt to its full and unscrupulous use. The West, however, differed from the East in a lack of organization and machinery which are, after all, necessary for any but the most elementary forms of society. It was a difference that the shrewder minds in the West had for some time been recognizing and Douglas was one of these observers. Himself an Easterner - from a state noted for its political passions, his mind readily improvised from time to time, the machinery that the energy of the West needed for most efficient service. A principle of dominating force was stirring in Douglas at this time with which he was later to be widely associated, but in 1840-1, he was not in full possession of the secret of this principle - and being a man of tremendous energy, he nearly wasted his moral substance. His moral obliqueness in the instance of the Secretary's position, in the trifling with the reorganization of the Supreme Court,





and his acceptance of the position as Supreme Judge, show clearly enough that his moral perceptives offered very small resisting forces to the current means of securing political advancement.<sup>(1)</sup>

An instance will serve to illustrate. Douglas was a prominent member of what was known as the "Third House", a lobby connected with the Legislature and having no official or legal status. Its avowed object was to plan legislation, and policy for the Democratic majority, and to push its execution. At this time the Supreme Court, which was largely Whig, were considering the interpretation of the Constitutional clause of State (1819) which stated that "every free white male inhabitant above the age of twenty-one years"

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(1) - The practical nature of Douglas, was also practical in the moral field, as well as in any other. To say he had no moral standing ground would be incorrect as the wisdom of the practicalist must include the practise of laws and customs sanctioned by the time. Therefore Douglas, as a keen observer of surface conditions and facts - as ambitious to rise in his day upon these facts - is wide awake also to the utilities of an outwardly moral life. He was not a moral enthusiast nor inspired by the sentiment of high moral thinking, but he had a regard for the properties that was not unusual in his day and took the things that were as a matter of course. He had no moral spontaneity.





should vote at all elections. It had been the custom to interpret "inhabitant" as any one, naturalized or not who otherwise met the requirements. This was the Democratic idea, and especially so as, at the last election, the Democratic vote was but three thousand in advance of the Whig vote - and nine-teenths of the alien vote of about ten thousand was Democratic. If the alien vote should be sacrificed because unnaturalized, the Democratic majority would pass. Therefore it was good Democratic policy to defend the alien vote, and Douglas did it vigorously. So far, so good. A test case is made before the Supreme Court. Douglas and M'Connell appeared for the appellants, and learning from the one Democrat on the Bench that an adverse opinion would be rendered, he argued for a post-ponement on the ground of a technicality (also suggested by the Democratic Judge) and the case was put over until after election. When the decision was rendered later it was reverse, as Douglas had been informed, though it applied only to the case in question and steered clear of all discussion of the large Constitutional phase.





The action of Mr. Smith of the Court, in giving the information has received its rightful condemnation. Douglas' part in the affair, though generally passed over by writers, is far from exemplary. This is not the worst phase of the situation, for there was going on in the lobby and in the Legislature an attempt to reorganize the whole judicial system, with the undoubted purpose of bringing it under the control of the Legislature, and changing its constituency. The fact of the adverse division on the Galena alien case only stimulated the Democratic leaders to most drastic action. The Supreme Court consisted of four members of whom three were Whigs. The re-organization scheme increased the number of judges to nine. The jurisdiction of the Court was extended to include that of the Circuit Courts and these were thrown out. A redistribution of the State into nine districts gave Douglas the fifth, known as the Quincy district and including the Mormon settlement. Though the measure was protested by the Governor and judicial council it passed the Legislature, the Senate giving it a large majority, but the House





a majority of one. (1)

Here lies the significance of this action. The emergence of a crisis in Democratic control seemed to call for strenuous measures equal to defeating the will of the people and subverting the Constitution. To gain the ends of himself and his party Douglas had twice sought to cast reflection upon a legal institution and to degrade the process of law in the eyes of the people. As a patriot and as a lawyer he had proven false, and he was to cap the climax by again making self-evident the fact that he was an officer-seeker in the vulgar sense. He was making political headway too fast for his moral caliber, and it was a fortunate thing for him that his new duties as Judge called him away from the center of scheming, and threw him out once more into a real and practical work. (2)

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(1) - Davidson and Stuvé, p 459.

(2) - Sheahan has nothing unfavorable to say of Douglas and his biography is often indiscriminating eulogy. Flint likewise. The "Sangamon Journal" of that day has this to say of Douglas' appointment as Judge. (Douglas) "had been of counsel for the aliens, had derived his information of how the case was going to be decided in June preceding, from Judge Smith, had obtained the continuance through the defect in the record as pointed out by him, had made a violent attack upon the old judges, by a characteristic speech in the lobby, and had furnished McClernand the date upon which the latter denounced the Court; in view of all of which it seems strange that he had sought and obtained a position side by side with the gentleman he had traduced and attempted so much to bring into disrepute. Partisan scheming and the cravings of office could not well go further."





(It is significant in this connection to note that many members of the House prepared a worthy statement of the evils of the judicial act, even after it had passed and could not be recalled, and that one of the signatures was that of A. Lincoln.) (1)

The act was repealed and the old order re-established in the new Constitution of 1848. Not again was the Supreme Court of Illinois made a prostrate servant of the party, though for the time the vote of the aliens was secured to the Democratic party. How Douglas served the party and State under this Act comes out in the Mormon troubles.

Into the long history of the Mormon Settlement in Illinois from 1839-46 it is unnecessary to go. The Mormons as a persecuted sect had come from Missouri to Illinois and could hardly be denied a refuge. They became located at Nauvoo on the Mississippi River in the Quincy District and rapidly developed into a very prosperous condition. At one time Nauvoo threatened to become the most important City on the River North of St. Louis. Before coming to Illinois the Mormons had supported the Democratic ticket but the refusal of Van Buren

(1) - See Davidson and Stuvé, p 459.





to protect them from the wrath of the Missourians turned them en bloc to the Whigs and in 1840 they voted for Harrison and Tyler. In order to gain certain favor in the Legislature in the granting of their City charter they played for both parties. Little, the Whig senator, and Douglas, the Democratic Secretary of State conducted the negotiations and so ardent was the desire to win their vote that a charter was granted, giving them almost independent rights - subject only to the State and National Constitutions. It was an extraordinary lease of power that furnished them military authority above the right of the State to interfere, and incorporating the "Nauvoo House" in perpetual succession to Joe Smith and his heirs. Douglas seems to have gained the upper hand, which he made good in his judicial visits to the region, and in his campaigning in 1842 for the Democratic State ticket. A. W. Snyder had been nominated against Joseph Duncan the Whig candidate, and as the author of the judiciary bill and of various favoring Mormon acts - his chances were good. Joseph Smith then issued this manifesto: "The partisan's in this county who expected to divide the friends of humanity and





equal rights will find themselves mistaken, - we care not a fig for Whig or Democrat; they are both alike to us; but we shall go for our friends, our tried friends, and the cause of human liberty which is the cause of God. . . . Douglas is a Master Spirit, and his friends are our friends - we are willing to cast our banners on the air, and fight by his side in the cause of humanity and equal rights - the cause of Liberty and the law. Snyder and Moore are his friends - they are ours. . . . they have served us and we will serve them." (1)

The death of Snyder before election caused the substitution of the name of Thomas Ford, but as his record was in no way connected with the Mormons - it made little real difference in the vote, and the Democrats carried the region by a large majority. Douglas' advocacy of the Mormon cause can hardly be credited to anything else than the desire to enlist their united vote for the Democratic party, and we cannot say that the desire was improper. It harmonized moreover, with his own personal opinion that there should be no persecution for religious reasons, and that every man

(1) - Allen Johnson - p. 59\_60.





should have the right to the full and free exercise of his opportunities. But partisan zeal over reached itself in this case, for Douglas failed to use wisdom and supported a policy that was soon to create real disaster in the State. The special privileges given to the Mormons aroused antagonisms on the part of the other citizens of the County, because the Mormons had become arrogant, and indulged the practises that had brought on former persecutions. Their number, nearly 20,000, insured power and their military equipment secured safety. Douglas, as Judge had several times saved Smith and others from trouble but the whole district demanded protection, and the expulsion of the tribe from the State. Sufficient to say here that Douglas used his power as mediator many times to good effect and in 1846 was probably effective in inducing the Mormons to retire from the State and emigrate West, without causing bloodshed. It was a signal triumph of personality and in the major, reflects considerable good sense and executive ability upon Douglas. He was about the only man in the State capable of dealing with the situation, and finally Congress





called upon him to settle the whole intricate affair. This was done through personal consultation with the Mormon leaders under Brigham Young, who had succeeded to the Mormon headship when Joseph Smith was shot. The Mormon experiment is both interesting and instructive but lack of source material on Douglas' work in the Hancock and Quincy region is to be deplored.





The census of 1840 had so increased the State's population that she was entitled to three more representatives, seven in all, and the State had to be redistricted. With the Democrats in power this was done in true gerrymandering fashion and Douglas was to reap his first national honors. In 1842 he had nearly a majority of votes in the legislative caucus, being defeated on the 19th. ballot by Sydney Breese for the high office of United States Senator. But in 1843, in Pike County, forty Democrats met and cast their votes for Douglas as the party candidate for Congress and however unofficial this action may have been it was acquiesced in, and Douglas found himself opposing O. H. Browning of Kentucky for the election. Many settlers had rushed to the prairie regions and the outlying counties by 1843 and more from the North than from the South. Sectionalism had begun to raise its head and Douglas was not at that time averse to making political capital out of it. The Northern candidate was a Democrat, and the Whig candidate was a Southerner. After a short but very bitter canvass Douglas was elected with 461





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votes to spare. At thirty years of age - ten years of experience in the frontier state of Illinois - he passes to Washington for a continual service of eighteen years.





## Conclusion.

What can we feel that Douglas has gained by his ten years of life in the West?

How far had he utilized the experience for a real personal development that should spell power and be prophetic of future growth? Any dogmatic answer to these questions cannot be yielded as yet - not until we have passed in review some of those great measures that so engaged his mind and will in the House. It is possible however to indicate the tendencies that had been called forth in his nature by the trend of daily events.

First, we shall place the growth of a perfect self confidence that never allowed him to feel ill at ease, or permitted him to dread defeat, when fronting critical situations.

Second, the development of fearlessness which seeming at first like mere bravado, became simply the physical and mental make up of the man.

Third, a growing belief in the argument ad hominem - aided by a kind of physical control of the audience.

Fourth, the increasing presence of certain mounting convictions - backgrounds for generalisations - as -





- (a) rights of the people,
- (b) land ownership and the logic of expansion.
- (c) omnipotence of party.
- (d) utility of government.

Fifth, an enlarging desire to cultivate the friendships of life - and to extend its favors.

On the other hand certain baneful effects of that life are to be noticed, not the least of which are these:

First, failure to raise his plane of morality by conscious effort - simply letting nature play. Lacks reflective meditation.

Second, failure to judge the larger questions by any other than party standards.

Third, tendency to coarseness of thought and utterance.

Fourth, unwillingness to make sufficient preparation for tasks, and to rest satisfied with half-work.

Fifth, growing inclination to trust in argument and personal influence to convince, rather than to search for the truth per se.





These are but some very apparent tendencies of Douglas - his personal equipment, as he goes into the larger sphere of human action.

#### PART IV.

##### DOUGLAS IN THE SPHERE OF INTERNATIONALITY.

1. Summary sketch of First Session, -  
the subject of the session.
2. Origin: Expansion movement, -  
national expansion.
3. National War: Expansion movement, -  
national expansion.
4. Origin: Expansion movement, -  
national expansion.
5. Origin: Expansion movement, -  
national expansion.





## P A R T I V .

## DOUGLAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

- A. Summary sketch of first session, -  
a political introduction.
- B. Texas: Expansion announced, -  
national promise.
- C. Mexican War: Expansion proclaimed, -  
national aggrandizement.
- D. Oregon: Expansion compromised, -  
national limitation.





P A R T IV .

DOUGLAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
1842 - 1847 .

4. Summary sketch of his first session -  
a political introduction.

Douglas in the House of Representatives.

In December 1842, President John

A. Summary sketch of first session -

a political introduction.

"It is due to every consideration of  
public policy that the taken and given of the war  
should receive all such attention at the hands of  
Congress as the Constitution will require it to  
bestow. While in favorable and proper relations  
on the latter side to be as an independent  
agency in a word of war, to carry on successful  
moral operations, as fortifications on the Atlantic  
and Pacific." (1)

In December 1842, the House being  
in a condition of the state in the state of the

(1) - Congressional Globe 26 Cong. 1 Sess. p. 9





Union, the Clerk asked that this Session be referred to the Committee on Commerce. (1)

P A R T IV .

An amendment was offered by Stephen Doug-

lass, DOUGLAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

1843 - 1847 . (2)

After the remarks just read, by Stephen

Douglas A. Summary sketch of his first session, - marks, the nature a political introduction. He is showing in his action effort, a point of view.

On December 5th- 1843, President John Tyler submitted to both Houses of Congress a Message, in which occurred these words;

"It is due to every consideration of public policy that the Lakes and Rivers of the West should receive all such attention at the hands of Congress as the Constitution will enable it to bestow. Works in favorable and proper situations on the Lakes would be found to be as indispensably necessary in a case of War, to carry on successful naval operations, as fortifications on the Atlantic Sea Board." (1)

On December 19 - 1843, the House being in a Committee of the Whole on the state of the

(1) - Congressional Globe 28 Cong. 1 Sess. p 9

(2) See speech of Andrew Johnson of Indiana. 1844, p 49

(3) 28 Cong. 1 Sess.





Union, the Clerk asked that this Section be referred to the Committee on Commerce. (1)

An amendment was offered by Stephen Douglas, to the effect that this matter should be referred to a special Committee of nine. (2)

After the remarks pro and con, by members Douglas supported his amendment by a few brief remarks, the nature of which are significant, merely, as showing in his maiden effort, a point of view. He protested the advent of sectionalism by rebuking those speakers who had sought to rouse the West against the North (3) denying "that the Western interests were antagonistic to the interests of other States", and affirming that "the interests of all were identified". (4)

He favored a special committee because the "interests involved were very important and to some extent local in their character", and hence there should be expert handling of the facts. The Committee on Commerce was made up entirely of Easterners, and Douglas wished Western men to constitute the committee.

The moderation of Douglas upon this first

(1)-Cong.Globe, 28 Cong. 1 Sess. p 48

(2) - ibid p 50.

(3) See speech of Andrew Kennedy of Indiana. ibid p 49

(4) ibid p 52





occasion will be apparent to any one reading the speeches of others from the Western States. His protest and his defined purpose are worthy of praise.

On December 6 -1843, C. J. Ingersoll, of Pa. introduced the following Bill:-

"An Act to refund the fine imposed on General Andrew Jackson."

"Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled, that the sum of one thousand dollars, paid by General Andrew Jackson, as a fine imposed on him at New Orleans, the 31 day of March, A. D. 1815, be repaid to him, together with interest, at the rate of 6% a year, since then, out of any moneys in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated." (1)

On December 29, 1843 in Committee of the Whole, Alexander Stephens of Georgia moved an Amendment with the following proviso:-

"That nothing herein contained shall be intended to be so construed as to imply any cen-





sure upon the Judge (1) who imposed said fine, or in any way to question the propriety of his decision in said case." (2)

Owing to the illness of Mr. Ingersoll the conduct of the case was entrusted to John Slidell of Louisiana.. Many of the States had forwarded Resolutions asking for the remission of the fine, and the majority of Speeches favored the action. Briefly, this was a case coming under the Suspension of Writ of habeas corpus. (3) General Jackson was in command of the army in Louisiana and attempting to repel the British forces under General Pakenham. Many French and Spanish were in New Orleans and were seeking to be friendly to the British, when Jackson arrested one Louallier, as a spy. Marshall law had been declared. Judge Hall, of the United States District Court issued the writ of habeas corpus, and Jackson straightway arrested the Judge and sent him without the City limits. He also had the Legislative Hall surrounded with troops to prevent the

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(1) - Judge D. A. Hall,

(2) - Cong Globe, 28 C. 1 Sess p 87.

(3) - Art. 1; Section 9- Clause 2. U.S. Const. -

"The privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in cases of Rebellion or Invasion, the public Safety may require it."





legislature from surrendering the City. Jackson then defeated the British army, and the news of peace between the two countries following, he restored the Civil authority, delivered himself over to the Court, and was fined by Judge Hall one thousand dollars. This he paid at once.

The argument against the restoration of fine was based on the ground that it would be equivalent to sanctioning an unconstitutional act, and reproving a public servant for having performed a sworn duty.

The argument favoring the refunding of the fine naturally upheld the necessity of the moment as a justification though its unconstitutionality was generally admitted.

Douglas denied the unconstitutionality of Jackson's act, and demanded the refunding as a right long deferred. He claims to have been the first to so state the case.<sup>(1)</sup> His speech is largely devoted to proving the necessity for the act of Jackson - his right to impose martial law and make himself dictator - his final willingness to give himself up to the Courts, when the real emergency

(1) - See his statement taken down by Mr. Cutts in his Constitutional and Party Questions. p 38.





had passed. He also attempts to prove the traitorous character of Judge Hall by conniving with Louallier, and to show that Jackson did not get the Writ until after its legal time of fulfillment, when it was legally dead - finally appealing to the general American patriotism for Jackson, the people's hero. Douglas said, "hour of danger." (1)

"He was not one to admit that General Jackson violated the Constitution, or the law at New Orleans. He denied that he violated either . . . the defense of the lives and liberties of the people, as well as their property, being all entrusted to the discretion of the Commanding General, it became his duty to declare Martial Law, if the necessity of the case required it. The necessity of the case was the law to govern him, and he, on his own responsibility must judge of the existence of that necessity . . . if martial law was necessary to the salvation of the country, martial law was legal for that purpose . . . the civil law and the Courts were in full force, True General Jackson would not allow them to communicate with the enemy; but they could not surrender

(1) - Cong Globe 48 Cong. 1 Sess. pp 113-14  
(2) - 1813 p 120.





ought to the enemy. He deprived them of the power to commit treason; but he deprived them of no power an honest man would desire to exercise. He imposed no restraint that any man devoted to the country would regret; and the men who instigated the proceedings against General Jackson were the men who skulked in the hour of danger." (1)

On January 8-1844, the yeas and nays were taken upon the Stephens Amendment to Ingersoll's motion and the amendment was lost, 38 to 122. The yeas and nays were taken upon the main motion and the motion was carried 158 to 28. General Jackson thus received back with interest the amount of the fine.(2)

The interpretation of men upon this exploit of Douglas vary all the way from the contempt and boredom of John Quincy Adams to the grateful thanks of Jackson himself, extended to Douglas when, with other visitors, he called on the hero at the Hermitage, nearly a year later. . . . Adams, an acute observer of men, honest but clothing his honesty of purpose with a rankling armour of sarcasm that too often raised the atmosphere of

(1) - Cong Globe 28 Cong. 1 Sess. pp 113-14  
 (2) - ibid p 120.





hostility, stifling the effective merit of his wisdom. Adams deigns to record his opinion of Douglas on this occasion, writing

"An eloquent, sophistical speech, prodigiously admired by the slave democracy of the House." (1)

Thus the most finished scholar and perhaps best trained statesman of that generation in the House - a perfectly fearless man, and also one feared above all others for his merciless invective - yet sees fit to actually praise the effort of Douglas and to testify to his popularity.

At the other extreme we have the testimony of Jackson to the effect produced upon him by this speech, grasping Douglas by the hand, as he advanced in the line of introduction he made him be seated, saying

"You are the first man that has ever relieved my mind on a subject which has rested upon it for thirty years ' . . . I never could understand how it was that the performance of a solemn duty to my Country - a duty which, if I had neglected would have made me a traitor in the sight of God and

(1) - J. Q. Adams, Memoirs XI, p 478.





man, could properly be pronounced a violation of the Constitution . . . but I could never make out a legal justification for my course, until you, on the floor of Congress . . . established it beyond the possibility of cavil or doubt. . . . I can now go down to the grave in peace, with the perfect consciounness that I have not broken, at any period of my life, the Constitution or laws of my Country". (1)

Douglas was said to be deeply affected, and well he might be for the reward was genuinely bestowed. The speech itself presents an excellant example of Western and Southern extravagance of statement, with the emphasis placed continuously where it will draw most upon the sympathies of the audience. The ordinary arts of the demagogue are certainly present, assuming dogmatically the correctness of the outlying facts, and the incontrovertibility of the deduction therefrom, followed by the attempt to hold up to scorn and derision the one who would vote against the Bill.

But through it all, as the flashes in the darkened sky, there are seen now and then the brighter elements of personal loyalty, national pat-

(1) - Sheahan: Douglas pp 70-71

men, could properly be designated a violation of  
the Constitution . . . and I could never take  
out a legal justification for my conduct, until you  
on the floor of Congress . . . established it be-  
yond the possibility of doubt . . . I  
and now go down to the grave in peace, with the  
perfect consciousness that I have not broken, at any  
period of my life, the Constitution or laws of my  
country". (1)

Nothing was said to be legally affected,  
and will be right to let the record be accurately  
restored. The speech itself presents an excellent  
example of Western and Southern civilization of  
statesmen, with the emphasis placed continuously  
where it will draw best upon the sympathies of the  
audience. The ordinary state of the dialogue  
is certainly present, assuming objectively the  
correctness of the existing facts, and the invari-  
ous validity of the historical perspective, followed  
by the attempt to hold up to scorn and derision the  
one who would vote against the bill.

But enough is said, on the floor in  
the darkest day, there are men and then the  
wonderful elements of personal loyalty, national self-



riotism, generous enthusiasm and the sense of justice. The evidence of the contemporary press and of those who heard him were generally favorable. Douglas had advanced a step toward national recognition, not unaided, but under the spell of a mighty name in his day and party. He chose well in thus introducing himself to the American public.

The first session of the 28th. Congress has its significance for Douglas in, that he has clearly planted himself upon the platform of progression, as regards the American policy of development and expansion, besides the Resolutions introduced by him, and the many times that he gets the attention of the House, he definitely makes set speeches which are reported in the Congressional Globe on four subjects: -

- 1 - A Bill to refund the Jackson Fine;
- 2 - The Report, as Chairman of the Committee, on the case of Members, elected by general





ticket (instead of District);

3 - On the Western Harbor Bill

4 - On the Civil and Diplomatic Appropriation Bill.

Thus Douglas steps forth in his bid for National fame as a defender of the internal improvement system of the government; an opponent of the growing sectionalism of the Country; a follower of the democracy of Jackson; a believer in the value of personal friendship. Into this legislation we shall not go, but we simply present the matter upon which Douglas is engaged, during this first Session. It is very significant that the attention of Douglas fastens upon the improvement of the Western areas, and he endeavors to secure for the West, the consideration that the Government has so long given to the East. He distinctly favors Governmental assistance, but only when the appropriation can be used for a National purpose. He would oppose the nation improving rivers and harbors that were wholly within one State. His view here is distinctly large and national. Before he finishes his career in the House, of only four years, he will have made





himself a National figure, and though he will have variously enlarged his field of service, he will yet not have departed far from the suggestions laid down in his first appearances.





Douglas in the House of Representatives.

B. Texas: Expansion announced, -

national promise.





## DOUGLAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

## B. TEXAS. - EXPANSION ANNOUNCED -

national growth.

On December 12, 1844 Mr. C. J. Ingersoll of Pa., from the Committee on Foreign affairs, reported a joint resolution providing for the Annexation of Texas, to the United States. It was read and ordered to a second reading. (1)

On December 23, 1844, Mr. Douglas, having already given notice, introduced a joint resolution for the re-annexation of Texas to the United States, in conformity with the Treaty of 1803, for the purchase of Louisiana.. This was read twice and referred to the Committee of the Whole, on the State of the Union. (2)

The main difference between these two sets of Resolutions lies in the emphasis Douglas lays upon the idea of re-annexation, implying and clearly stating that the territory under consideration was all a part of the Louisiana Purchase Treaty of 1803, and now was the moment when we should carry

(1) - Cong. Globe 28 Cong. 2 Sess. p 26

(2) - ibid pp 65-6





out the treaty stipulations interrupted by the Florida Treaty of 1819. When the United States acquired Florida from Spain, she accepted as the boundary line between the Mexican provinces and her own a line "up the Sabine River to the Red River; up the Red River, to looth degree longitude, west from Greenwich; thence due north on said meridian to the Arkansas River; thence up the Arkansas to its source; thense due north to the 42nd md. parallel of latitude; thence due west on said parallel to the Pacific ocean or South Sea." (1) The possession of the land between the Sabine and the Rio Grande under the Louisiana purchase was the annexation. The loss to Spain in 1819 is now to be followed by a re-annexation. In other particulars the resolutions are in agreement.

On January 3, 1845 Mr. Ingersoll again read, through the Clerk, his resolutions. Mr. Weller added as an Amendment his own set of Resolutions to which Mr. Douglas attached his Resolutions. (2)

On January 25, 1845 Mr. Douglas attached to Mr. Weller's amendment, a new proposition, being-

(1) - Cutts - Constitutional and Party Questions pp60-61.

(2) Cong. Globe, 28 C. 2 Sess. pp 84-85





"A joint Resolution for the admission of Texas as a State of the Union." (1)

A vote on the Douglas amendment to the amendment resulted in its defeat 96 to 107.

Mr. Milton Brown, of Tennessee, then made an Amendment to Mr. Weller's amendment, to the effect that Texas shall be admitted as a State to the Union and that

"New States of convenient size, not exceeding four in number, in addition to said State of Texas, and having sufficient population, may hereafter, by consent of said State, be formed out of the territory thereof. . . . and such States as may be formed out of that portion of said Territory lying South of 36 degrees 30 minutes N. L., commonly known as the Missouri Compromise Line, shall be admitted into the Union with or without slavery, as the people of each state asking admission may desire." (2)

To this Amendment Mr. Douglas, with the Consent of Mr. Brown added the following significant clause -

"And in such States as shall be formed out

(1) ibid p 192

(2) ibid p 193

"A Joint Resolution for the admission of

Texas as a State of the Union." (1)

A vote on the House's amendment to the

amendment resulted in the yeas 95 to 107.

Mr. Milton Brown, of Tennessee, then made

an amendment to Mr. Walker's amendment, to the

effect that Texas shall be admitted as a State to

the Union and that

"New States of convenient size, not ex-

ceeding four in number, in addition to said States

of Texas, and having sufficient population, may here-

after, by consent of said States, be formed out of

the territory thereof. . . . and such States as

may be formed out of that portion of said territory

which is north of the parallel 36 degrees 30 minutes N. . . . commonly

known as the Missouri Compromise line, shall be

admitted into the Union with no other slavery, as

the people of each State making admission may de-

termine." (2)

To this amendment Mr. Walker, with the

consent of Mr. Brown asked the following amend-

ment added -

"And in such States as shall be formed out

(1) Vote 91-103

(2) Vote 91-103



of said territory North of said Missouri Compromise line, slavery or involuntary servitude, except for crime, shall be prohibited." (1)

The Amendment to the amendment as modified by Douglas, was carried, 109 to 99, and the amended amendment was carried by 110 to 93.

The Weller amendment was now carried 118 to 101, and the joint resolution was finally passed 120 to 98.

The House Bill for the admission of Texas as a State in the Union, now goes to the Senate, and is there passed with only minor changes concerning the method of admission, and providing for the expense thereof.

On February 28-1845 the main question of concurrence in the Senate changes resulted in the passage of the Bill yeas, 132, nays, 76,

"Thus the joint resolution 'for Annexing Texas to the United States' is finally passed, and awaits only the signature of the President, to become a law." (2)

On March 1, 1845, John Tyler signed the Texas Bill. (3)

(1) - Cong Glob 28 C 2 Sess p 193.

(2) ibid - p 372.

(3) ibid p 385.





The area of this new addition to our domain was defined by the Texan Republic, December 19th, 1836 as follows:

"Beginning at the mouth of the Sabine River, and running West, along the Gulf of Mexico, three leagues from land, to the mouth of the Rio Grande, thence up the principal stream of that River to its source, thence due North, to the 42 degree of North latitude, thence along the Boundary line as defined in the Treaty between Spain and the United States, to the beginning." (1)

In this Thesis the concern is over the part played by Douglas in the Texas annexation. It is necessary then to examine his speeches for our evidence. On the assigning of credit for a share in the shaping of the Bill of Admission, to Douglas belongs the successful attempt to introduce the anti-slavery clause of the Missouri Compromise, - the idea which later he tries to carry out to the Pacific - and still later abandons altogether. We say successful attempt, but not first attempt, for that honor belongs to Mr. Tibbatts, of Kentucky, to whom also seems to be-

(1) - Henry Gannett, Boundaries of the United States; Bulletin No. 226, Geol. Survey. p 23.

The area of this map is shown to be  
defined by the Texas Republic. However  
high, and as follows:

"Beginning at the mouth of the Rio  
Grande, and running West, along the Gulf of Mexico,  
thence to the mouth of the Rio  
Grande, thence up the Rio Grande to the  
River to its source, thence due North, to the 40  
degrees of North latitude, thence along the boundary  
line as defined in the Treaty between Spain and  
the United States, to the beginning." (1)

In this Treaty the words "to the  
mouth of the Rio Grande" are used.  
It is necessary then to examine the evidence  
our evidence. On the question of evidence for  
there in the shape of the Rio of Abasco.  
to the Rio Grande, the abasco attempt to do  
to show the anti-slavery claims of the known  
Congress, - the issue which later he tried to  
carry out to the Pacific - and still later  
done altogether. No any successful attempt, but  
not first attempt. For that honor belongs to  
Tibetia, of Kentucky, to whom also seems to be

(1) - Henry Cannon, Representative of the United States  
Territory of New Mexico, 1850, 1851, 1852.



long the honor of insisting upon the admission of Texas as a State, in which view he was followed by Douglas. (1)

The fact that Douglas' first resolutions were for the admission of Texas as a Territory, rather than as a State and were introduced prior to the resolutions of Tibbatts; that his second resolutions were put forward subsequent to Tibbatts, and these were concerned with Statehood and the slavery question, seems to indicate where Douglas received the idea. Tibbatts had indicated that he considered this to be a Western problem.

The single speech of Mr. Douglas upon the Texas resolution of Annexation has a significance for us in definitely acquainting us with the attitude that is more and more to be a prominent feature of his Statesmanship. This largely though, by way of announcement, for the greater part of the address, as found in the Appendix to the Globe, is a somewhat close historical argument upon the whole ground covered by the opponents of the Bill, with one signal omission - the results of admission

(1) Cong. Globe 28 C 2 Sess. pp 130-1





upon the slavery question so emphasized in the Massachusetts Resolutions (1) quoted by Mr. Woodbury, of New Hampshire, but brought out by Mr. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, in a speech preceding that of Mr. Douglas.

Mr. Douglas was undoubtedly familiar with the fact that the New England objection to the annexation of Texas was based chiefly upon Constitutional grounds: -

A. As to the power of Congress to admit States or Territories into the Union from a foreign nation;

B. As to the right of Congress to introduce slavery into any State or Territory:

C1 As to the right of Congress, to admit, or be willing to carry on negotiations with Texas, while she was at war with Mexico.

Douglas first shows that the honor of the annexation idea belongs to John Quincy Adams, when President, and to his Secretary of State, Henry Clay, in 1825; (2) that failing in the negotiations the work was taken over by Andrew Jackson, and his Secretary, Martin Van Buren. The defeat of

(1) - Appendix Cong. Globe 28 C 2 Sess. p 237.  
(2) - Ibid p 65





Adams for reelection was partly due to his failure on the Texan matter. At least success would have done much to have won for Adams a larger vote - to have gained for him a larger support in the West. Jackson failing the first time, tried again, in 1833 and in 1835. . Douglas goes on to show that the actual boundary of the Louisiana Territory reached to the Rio del Norte - citing as high authority the earlier (1818) investigations of J. Q. Adams: who then wrote "well might Messrs. Pinckney and Monroe write to Mr. Cevallos in 1805, that the claim of the United States to the boundary of the Rio Bravo was as clear as their right to the Island of New Orleans". (1)

From the boundary question Douglas passes to the discussion of the 1819 treaty and in severe terms condemns the action as unAmerican, and a violation of the 1803 Purchase. He speaks of the Act of Independence of 1819 by which the Texans resolved to live apart from the "depostisism" of Spain.

"Yes, on that day, under the blessing of God, they resolved to be free; and most nobly have they maintained that righteous resolve, first, a-

(1) - Appendix Cong Globe 28 C 2 Sess. p 66.





gainst the despotism of Spain, and then the tyranny of Mexico, until, on the plains of San Jacinto, victory established their independence, and made them free. Having achieved their independence by the same means, and secured it by the same title as our fathers of the revolution they have assumed their place among the Nations of the Earth, and now call upon us to redeem our pledge of honor, and receive them into the Union according to the stipulations of the Treaty of 1803." (1)

To Douglas, the opponents of the measure seemed in reality to be repudiating the Treaty contracts of 1803, which insisted that

"the inhabitants of the ceded territory shall be incorporated into the Union of the U. S. and admitted as soon as possible, according to the principles of the Federal Constitution, etc." (2)

And he flung out "when a nation violates a faith, and repudiates her contracts, she is on the downward road to degradation and ruin, as inevitably as the individual who first becomes a gambler, and then turns high-way-man." (3)

Douglas now shows how the honor of the

(1) - ibid p 66.

(2) ibid, p 66

(3) ibid p 66.





Democratic party is at stake in this issue and must be saved by the annexation or deserves to perish through its defeat. He would have the action constitutional and enters into a long argument to show that our right exists under the clause that "new States may be admitted by Congress into the Union",<sup>(1)</sup> and has been exercised in such cases as Louisiana,, Florida, Missouri, Arkansas. . . . But as to the question of the constitutionality of admitting Territory for the purpose of admitting States, made so much of by Mr. Winthrop of Massachusetts, he would say that the Constitution specifies that Congress is authorized,

"To make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers and all other powers vested by this constitution, in the Government of the U. S. or in any department or office thereof." (2)

Thus Congress has a power to admit new States and to pass whatever laws may be necessary for this admission. In the present case it is annexation and Congress has authority to annex Texas and to admit her as a State or States.

(1) - ibid p 67.

(2) - ibid p 67





As to the question of admitting Texas when she is at War with Mexico, Douglas maintains there is no war, nor has been for nine years. He says,-

"Texas achieved her independence and holds it by the same title we do ours - a title which Mexico dare not enter her limits, and their dispute. Her independence has been recognized by the U'S., Great Britain,, France and most of the great powers of the earth. The only pretext seized upon by the enemies of Texas, for denying her independence, is that Mexico refuses to recognize her. If the consent of Mexico is essential to the independence of Texas, then it follows that Mexico never had any legal claim to Texas for the reason that Spain never acknowledged the independence of Mexico, until after Texas had separated from Mexico, and achieved her own independence." (1)

More germane to our purpose, however, are the concluding portions of his speech where Douglas speaks to the argument against the expansion of Territory, as dangerous. He held that there need be no apprehension from expansion, of

(1) - ibid p 68





peril to our institutions.

"The application of steam power to transportation and travel has brought the remotest limits of the Confederacy now comprising 26 States, much nearer to the center than when there were but thirteen. The Revolution is progressing, and the facilities and rapidity of communication are increasing in a much greater ratio than our territory or population." (1)

"Our Federal System is admirably adopted to the whole continent; and while I would not violate the law of Nations, nor Treaty stipulations, nor in any manner tarnish the National honor, I would exert all legal and honorable means to drive Great Britain and the last vestiges of Royal authority from the continent of North America, and extend the limits of the Republic from ocean to ocean. I would make this an ocean bound republic, and have no more disputes about boundaries, or red lines<sup>(2)</sup> upon the maps."<sup>(3)</sup>

Into the merits of the Texan question, we cannot go, further than to say that the speech

(1) - ibid p 68

(2) - Refers to a map of Franklin's which has U.S. boundaries marked on it with red lines, found by Sparks in 1841, and dating back to 1782.

(3) - Appendix. Cong. Globe 28 C, 2 S. p 68.





of Douglas could have had very small influence in deciding the final vote as an analysis of the House vote will show. The measure itself was primarily a House measure, and the fullest sentiment of the Country can be best shown from the House speeches. The vote by sections was as follows:

(1) New England			(2) Middle Atlantic,		
States - ayes - nays			States - ayes - nays		
Maine	3	2	New York	21	8
N.H.	3	1	N. J.	2	1
Mass	2	8	Pa.	10	9
R. I.	1	1	Del	0	1
Conn.	3	0	MD.	0	4
Vt	1	3			
<hr/>			<hr/>		
Total	13	15	Total	33	23
(3) South Atlantic			(4) North Western		
Va	8	4	Ohio	6	7
N. C.	6	2	Ind	7	2
S. C.	5	0	Ill	5	1
Ga	5	0	Mich	3	0
<hr/>			<hr/>		
Totals	24	6	Total	21	10





## (5) Gulf and South Western.

States. - Ayes - Nays.

Ala	5	0
Miss	2	0
La	3	0
Ky	7	0
Tenn	4	3
Mo	3	0
Ark	1	0

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 Totals (1) 25 3

This vote reveals among other things that the New England section alone voted as a section against annexation, but only by a margin of two; that but five out of twenty-six states voted against annexation - namely, - Mass. Vt., Delaware, Maryland, and Ohio; that the Southern and Western States were overwhelmingly in favor of annexation - save Ohio, which opposed annexation largely on slavery grounds.

The arguments of Douglas touched chiefly the constitutional grounds and were directed against New England. It is very doubtful if he succeeded





in winning any votes in this region - at most but two or three and not enough to carry the section. His influence upon the large majority sections was probably small, for two reasons, - (a) these sections naturally favored the annexation for political, economic and social reasons, and (b) Douglas failed to treat the English phase of the question, the most vital from their point of view. The South and West did not doubt in the main, that we had the right to Texas, and that the method of annexation was just, but they were far more exercised over the thought that England had made overtures to Texas and that if we turned the cold shoulder at this time, Texas would pass to English rule.

The Southern view point is well put by one Northern newspaper::

"England pays a hundred million dollars in tribute to our cotton, vainly has she striven to escape this dependence on us by growing cotton in Egypt and India, but until she has a rival cotton growing country, she is in our power. This rival she seeks to raise up in Texas, and this is the secret of her activity in behalf of the Lone





Star Republic". (1)

It is also emphasized by the Southern and south-western speakers, summarized by an eminent historian (2) as follows:

"If Texas be not annexed England will come into the market west of the mountains with articles - will guarantee the independence of Texas, and Texas will admit her articles duty free, and the manufacturers of iron, cotton, wool, shoes, hats, furniture, will not only lose the market of Texas, but of the entire West. The cotton of Texas will go duty free to England, while that of the South will pay a duty of 17%."

The need of the south for more soil for cotton growing, tobacco, and for slavery were the compelling arguments that gained votes for the annexation measure, and these were bearly touched by

Douglas. He devoted himself more closely to the Constitutional phase, and in that did not prove himself equal to the demands. As an historical resumé of the question it was adaaquate, but hardly deserving of the high place ascribed to it by some of his biographers. It does however establish Douglas

(1) - Philadelphia Ledger, July 24, 1843.

(2) - J. B. McMaster, History of the People of the U.S. vol 7, p 400.





as a thorough going expansionist. The point of view of the West on this whole Texan question was largely a matter of the onward movement of population. Hardly can it be said that the question of slavery was one that moved the Western mind to vote either for or against the Texan proposition.<sup>(1)</sup>

Douglas in his speech did stress this expansion view to a certain extent, but the emphasis which has been laid by most of our historians upon the slavery argument for the annexation of Texas, is hardly to be accepted, in the light of more modern research. It was nothing more nor less than the movement of the people from the uplands of the South into the new territory<sup>(2)</sup> simply a continuation of the old movement from the coast to the upland region near the mountains, from there into the middle west, - and now spreading to the SouthWest and to the far West. His biographers, Johnson excepted, and the historians, such as Schouler, VonHolst, Rhodes and, to a certain extent, McMaster, emphasise the slavery question to such an extent that the relative significance of the natural expansion of the people is largely lost.

(1) - Ohio excepted.

(2) - See Woodrow Wilson - History American people - Texas.





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On December 2, 1845 President Polk sent his annual Message to Congress, in which he wrote:-

"The terms of annexation which were offered by the United States, having been accepted by Texas the public faith of both parties is solemnly pledged to the compact of their union. Nothing remains to consummate the event but the passage of an Act by Congress to admit the State of Texas into the Union, upon an equal footing with the original States. Strong reasons exist why this should be done at an early period of the session . . . . The existing government is only continued temporarily till congress can act. . . . I cannot to earnestly recommend prompt action on this important subject . . . . This accession to our territory has been a bloodless achievement, no arm of force has been raised to produce the result, the sword hath had no part in the victory: we have not sought to extend our territorial possessions by conquest, or our republican institutions over a reluctant people. It was the deliberate homage of each people to the great principle of our federated Union." (1)

(1) - Cong Globe 29 Cong. 1st. Sess p. 5





On December 8, 1845 Stephan A. Douglas was appointed Chairman of the Committee on Territories. (1)

On December 9, 1845, Mr. Douglas offered the Resolutions, referring the parts of the President's message to the appropriate committees for action - that on Texas to the Committee of Territories, (2)

On December 10, 1845, Mr. Douglas read the resolutions for the admission of the State of Texas into the Union. The Resolution states that Texas had already formed her constitution, modeled upon a Republican form and that it has been properly laid before the President, and Congress therefore:-

"Be it Resolved, . . . . that the State of Texas shall be one, and is hereby declared to be one, of the United States of America, and admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the original States in all respects whatever.

Be it further Resolved, That, until the

(1) - Cong. Globe 29 Cong 1st Ses. p 25  
(2) ibid p 32





Representatives in Congress shall be appointed according to an actual enumeration of the inhabitants of the United States, the State of Texas shall be entitled to chose two representatives." (1)

Mr1 Douglas then moved that thre resolution be made the special order of business for the following Tuesday, and it was carried.

On December 16, 1845 the Texas resolution for admission as a State came before the House, and after some parliamentary discussion, was passed 141 to 57, to a third reading. (2)

The next stage was, "Shall this joint resolution pass?" Mr. Rockwell of Massachusetts obtained the floor and made a long speech against the admission of Texas, in which he took strong constitutional grounds, - even that it was the doctrine of the Fathers of the Constitution -

"That the joint-resolution of one Congress might be repealed by another . . . That if the 28th. Congress agreed to receive Texas in that mode, they received it subject to repeal and reconsideration by the Present Congress, and an

(1) \_ ibid p 39-40

(2) - ibid pp 61-2





amendment was made, and additional conditions subsequently added, so that the prerogative of the Treaty-making power might, in some degree, be carried out by the Legislature." (1)

Mr. Rockwell complained as a member of the Committee on Territories, (2) that Mr. Douglas had called a meeting of the Committee for the day following the reference of the resolutions to the Committee - that the Committee met and at once reported the Resolutions to the House, (3) but at that time the Texan Constitution, which was to be submitted to Congress, had not been printed. Only four days later had he been furnished with a copy, and he found therein the word "slaves" (4) - a word foreign to our Constitution, and in which territory, or States carved out of which Territory, the Legislature could never emancipate a slave, South of 36 degrees, 30 minutes N.L., and so far from allowing even a choice on the subject, only to the States lying south of the line, slavery was established by the Constitution throughout, (5)

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(1) - *ibid*, p 62.

(2) - Mr. Rockwell, of Mass. was the only member of Committee of Territories against the resolution.

(3) Discussion in the House, limited to two hours, of which one and one half hours was taken up by reading of documents, and remaining thirty minutes by four democrats. No Whig could get the floor.

(4) Cong. Globe 29 C. 1 Sess. p 63.

(5) Article VIII Const. Texas. Sec. 1. "The Legis-





and the very letter of that instrument, which gentlemen were driving through this house with such intemperate haste, was in direct and open conflict with the stipulations of the very Resolution on which the admission of Texas was contended for." (1)

Mr. Rockwell in no uncertain way, stated his belief that there had been but one chief motive for the conduct of the Texas affair, admitted by Calhoun and Upshur, "and, when not only this Congress, but this administration should long have passed away, and this transaction should come to be examined into by an impartial posterity, it would be found that the leading reason avowed by the American Secretary of State, Calhoun to the Minister of Great Britain, in the face of both Countries, and of the world. in a diplomatic note dated April 27, 1844, was declared to preserve a certain domestic institution, under the requisite guaranties. This would remain forever the historical reason given by our own government for the Annexation of Texas to this Union." (2)

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lature shall have no power to pass laws for the emancipation of slaves, without the consent of their owners '... They shall have no power to prevent emigrants to this State from bringing with them such persons as are deemed slaves by the laws of any of the U. S, so long as any persons of same age or description, shall be continued in slavery by the laws of this State." Appendix Cong. Globe, 29 Cong. 1st Sess. p 52.

(1) *ibid* p 63. - (2) *ibid* p 63





Passing on Mr. Rockwell gave a prophetic utterance, saying

"That the country was now standing on the verge and first commencement of a policy which was to, hereafter govern our councils, and to become emphatically the American policy, and which was to connect the territories of the entire continent into one consolidated body, and constitute them the United States of North America, Sooner or later, fairly or unfairly, this will be our destiny." (1) Mr. Rockwell closed by offering as an amendment to the resolution the following:

"Provided, that slavery and involuntary servitude (except for crime) be prohibited in the State by these Resolutions admitted into the union, and that all the provisions on the Constitution of that State, inconsistent with this proviso, shall be null and void." (2)

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(1) - See Mr. Rockwell's testimony to the part

Mass. would play in the development of the West, demanding "then as now, that the extension of the Republic shall be not in specious profession, but in truth 'the extension of the area of freedom'". Appendix Cong Globe, 29 Cong 1st Sess. p 53.

(2) *ibid* p 54.





After considerable filibustering the vote was taken on the adoption of the joint resolution, and carried 141 to 56.<sup>(1)</sup>

The Resolution as passed was then sent to the Senate.

On December 27, 1845 word was received that the Senate had passed the Texas Bill, and the House rapidly put it through the three readings, and passed it.

The opposition in the Senate does not immediately concern us, but its highest grounds, were perhaps most succinctly expressed by Daniel Webster on December 22, 1845.

"I have on the deepest reflection, long ago come to the conclusion, that it is a very dangerous tendency and <sup>of</sup> doubtful consequences to enlarge the boundaries of this Country, or the territories over which our laws are now established. There must be some limit to the extent of our territory if we would make our institutions permanent. And this permanency forms the great subject of all my political efforts, the paramount

(1) - Cong Globe 29 Cong 1 Sess p 65





object of my political regard. The Government is very likely to be endangered by a further enlargement of the territorial surface, already so vast, over which it is extended.

I have always wished that this country should exhibit to the Nations of this earth the example of a great, rich and powerful republic, which is not possessed by a spirit of <sup>g</sup>aggrandizement. It is an example, I think, due from us to the world, in favor of the character of Republican Government.

While I hold with as much integrity, I trust, and faithfulness, as any citizen of the Country, to all the original arrangements and compromises under which the Constitution, under which we now live, was adopted, I never could and never can persuade myself to be in favor of the admission of other States into the Union as slave states, with the inequalities which were allowed, and accorded by the Constitution to the slave holding States then in existence . . . . I cannot but think the time will come when all will be convinced that there is no reason, political or moral, for increasing





the number of the States, and increasing at the same time the obvious inequality which exists in the representation of the people in Congress by extending slavery and slave representation." (1)

Mr. Webster further objected that the State Constitution imposed restraints upon its own legislature on the question of slavery abolition - also that the true method of bringing Texas into the Union was by "diplomatic arrangement, sanctioned by treaty." (2)

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(1) - Works of Daniel Webster, Vol 5, p 55-59.

(2) - Texas Annexation had been already rejected through treaty method by the adverse vote of 35 to 16. This vote by sections shows:

New England	For Annexation	1	Against	-11.
Middle States	"	2	"	6
Southern States	"	10	"	12
Western States	"	3	"	6

Thus in the South alone was the sentiment any where equally balanced.

See D. G. Wooten - Comprehensive History of Texas, Vol 1, p 678, Art. by S. B. Maxey, on Annexation.





The conduct of the case for the admission of Texas as a State, was, from a party standpoint satisfactory, from almost any other, inadequate and questionable. Once Texas had been annexed there must be no delay in her admission as a State - and the party demands were urgent upon whom so-ever should pilot the matter to the goal. Douglas was becoming a master spirit in applying the method of haste as solvent for political emergencies, and the present instance was to increase the importance of his special role.





Douglas in the House of Representatives.

C. Mexican War: Expansion proclaimed -

national aggrandizement.





DOUGLAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

C. THE MEXICAN WAR. - EXPANSION PROCLAIMED  
national aggrandizement.

On May 13, 1846, the Bill making appropriations for the support of the Army was under consideration in the House, Mr. Delano, Of Ohio spoke in vindication of his vote against the Bill in the course of which he said that,

"War was declared, and the time had arrived when he was compelled to go for his country right or wrong. Up to that period he had endeavored to keep his Country in the right, but war having been declared he would now sustain the arms and maintain the exertions of the Country . . . Send your armies in the prosecution of this illegal, unrighteous. and damnable war, to the mountains of Mexico, and disease and the foe will sweep them off in thousands. The passes and mountains of Mexico would become a charnel house for our people, and their bones would be scattered all over its





vast territory before this peace would be conquered." (1)

Mr. Douglas at once replied in the longest speech he had so far made. The first part of the speech was directed at Mr. Delino and others, who though supporting the measures of appropriation for the furtherance of the War, yet indulged themselves in making clear their hostility to the whole affair. It all seemed to Douglas to be a form of disloyalty to the larger issue - a kind of back-door support of the enemy, if we may so express it, and peculiarly disreputable. Mr. Douglas takes no position upon purely moral grounds, and is satisfied with a standard of practical utility, real or assumed; shows no sympathy with the person who is forced to do things that are morally questionable - at least from the individual point of view. The courage that is needed by men who have to undergo the moral wrench (for example - Webster on the slavery question) was an unknown element in the practise of Douglas, for it was not called into play - at least by 1846. The ideals of Douglas were hardly those fostered in the home, school and church, but rather those current in the

(1) - Cong Globe 29 C. 1Sess pp 814-815.





field of contemporary politics. The adjustments he found it necessary to make from time to time were as the changes in the platform of his party Convention -a taking on or lopping off, as it seemed to him to be the duty of one who had served his time. We shall reserve further discussion of this phase of his character until later, for it has too readily been taken for granted by most writers that this was an absolute process in the case of Douglas, and that principle had no part in his program. It is our Thesis that such statements are misleading. Mr. Douglas replying to Mr. Delano said,

"Is there not treason in the heart that can feel, and poison in the breath that can utter, such sentiments against their own country, when forced to take up arms in self defense, to repell the invasion of a brutal and invideoous foe? They for their country right or wrong! Who tell our people if they rally under our country standard, their bones will bleech on the plains of Mexico, and the enemy will look down from the mountain-top to behold the destruction of our armies by disease, and all those mysterous elements of death, which Divine





Providence employs to punish a wicked people for prosecuting an unholy and unjust war! Sir, I tell these gentlemen, it requires more charity than falls to the lot of frail man, to believe that the expression of such sentiments is consistent with the sincerity of their profession - with patriotism, and honor and duty to their country. Patriotism emanates from the heart; it fills the soul; inspires the whole man with devotion to his Country's cause, and speaks and acts the same language. America wants no friends, acknowledges the fidelity of no citizen, who, after war is declared, condemns the justice of her cause, and sympathises with the enemy. All such are traitors in their hearts, and it only remains for them to commit some overt act, for which they may be dealt with according to their deserts."<sup>(1)</sup>

And again - "Patriots may differ as to the expediency of a declaration of war, or the wisdom of a course of policy which may probably lead to such a result; but honor and duty forbid divided counsels after our Country has been invaded, and American blood has been shed on American soil. Party strife and political conflicts should then cease.

(1) - Appendix Cong Globe 29 C 1 Sess, pp 903-908.





One sentiment should animate every heart; one object control every movement - the triumph of our Country." (1)

The Douglas conception of duty might now be put in some such way as this: - place yourself freely in the current of affairs about you that your life may absorb and receive the impetus of the times. Thus you may grow strong, and quickly, in the feeling and understanding of your day, and your own moral nature will impose no snags to the onward progress of others. When comes the moment for individual initiative your duty will be to express, in whatever way your gift or talent lies, the beliefs that these contemporary currents have shaped within you, and if that freedom of training has been unalloyed with prejudice, or narrowing restrictions, the results must naturally adjust themselves to the welfare of men.

So in the question before us - the Mexican War - Douglas has grown with the feeling about him in his support<sup>of</sup> and enthusiasm for the measure. He has felt through his being the tremors of a patriotism that is explosive in its nature, as the mind continues to dilate upon the possible consequences of this war, but he has not yet learned that all the

(1)-

Cong. Globe 29 C. 1 Sess p 903.





currents with which man may be early surrounded, are not of a similar direction. To speak from the conviction of the heart, unchecked by the judgment of the sobering second thought, is a natural and popular method, but not all the wisdom of the ages is contained in it. The laborious and difficult task of training the mind to perform its rightful share in the work of life is also a current, that even from the Douglas code of ethics and psychology, is a legitimate one, though so far, an unregarded one. He has not yet learned the height and depth of his own philosophy, and his eloquence, while it enraptures his supporters, blinds him to its real unfairness in debate; yet it is sincere, for there is this singular thing about him, that is already apparent - he speaks the sincerity of self at the moment, and however illogical or inconsistent he is genuine and sincere. There has been lived by this man a life of detached, rather than united experiences, and the binding chain of logic is missing - unless it be the logic of chance! There are present in the man no strong spiritual relations with the past, and the sources for reverence of a discriminating nature are lacking.





He seems to be obsessed with the opportunities of the present, and becomes irritated when constantly balked by references that imply unusual respect for the traditions of governmental or other evolutions. He is the man of the moment, and for the moment, and he will be ruled but by the moment, and the present business of the Country is to prosecute, with vigor the Mexican War - even if necessary to march into the heart of Mexico and subdue it. He feels that it should be unnecessary to be constantly compelled through the utterance by opponents of the Bill of "traiterous sentiments" to defend the positive policy of his Country. The energies of the Country should all be directed towards the decreed goal, (he has no doubts as to the right of decreed") and not scattered in rhetorical draw-backs, or weakened by moral negatives.

Everywhere does Douglas show the impatience of a practical man of affairs, with the deterrent effects of a consistent and logical development of constitutional theory upon action - especially when that action may involve the existence of the theory itself. So far, we have been a witness to the





Douglas method of working for ends of immediate accomplishment. The measure of his success establishes the "accord" with the people, and upborne by a selection of Jacksonian precedents he grows into a policy of Americanism that is satisfied with a sense of movement, speculating not on costs, not on consistencies, nor harmonizations, with outgrown theories, but on the fundamental significance of contemporary legislation, execution, and decree.

The significance of his personal experience was apparently confirmatory of his developing policy, in that it showed the immeasurable superiority of the present and existing moment of time over all other and preceeding occasions. That which seemed to be the most profitable thing to do at any given moment - do. This needs some qualification in the Douglas so far revealed to us. And the first qualification we would make is that Douglas was not a purely selfish server of his time, he had his ideal and it was his Country. The sincerity of his patriotism can hardly be questioned, though we may want it defined as to quality. Therefore the most profitable thing to do at any given time in





the field of politics, would mean profitable for his country and not simply for himself. Whatever stood between his country's good and its realization was to be opposed, laid aside, overcome, struggled against, as the case might be, with the complete energy of a single purpose. Reasons to the contrary which did not root, in what he termed practical and essential facts, were mere verbiage, just so much clutter from which the Nation needed to be freed. This was his attitude on the Texan question - that if the republic could not be annexed by the constitutional method - by treaty made by the President and ratified by the Senate - then anyway that could accomplish this desired end would be justifiable - so do it by joint resolution of the two Houses of Legislature. Worn out means should not stand in the way of desired ends. (1)

Another qualification we would make is that Douglas was devoted to the Western ideal of his country, not the Eastern - the ideal of unlimited expansion, and so the profit of his country meant an ever-expanding country. He came very naturally by his desire for Texas, and his advocacy of the Mexican War, believing that it was for the

(1) - Recall his whole career in Illinois politics from 1835-1843.





best welfare of the nation that this continent should rapidly become Americanized. His duty was sun clear to himself , and he had not the depth or the humanity to understand the significance of another's objection. Let us illustrate by stating an objection urged by Abraham Lincoln in the United States House of Representatives, January 12, 1848 on the War Message of President Polk.

"In my view, just so far as she (Texas) carried her resolution by obtaining the actual, willing or unwilling, submission of the people, so far the Country was hers, and no farther. Now Sir, for the purpose of obtaining the very best evidence as to whether Texas had actually carried her revolution to the place where the hostilities of the present War commenced, let the President answer the interrogatories I proposed . . . . let him remember he sits where Washington sat, and so remembering let him answer as Washington would answer. As a nation should not, and the Almighty will not, be evaded, so let him attempt no evasion no equivocation. And if so answering, he can show that the soil was ours, where the first blood of





the war was shed, - that it was not within an inhabited country, or, if within such, that the inhabitants had submitted themselves to the civil authority of Texas . . . . . I am with him for his justification . . . but if he can not do this . . . . . trusting to escape scrutiny by fixing the public gaze upon the exceeding brightness of military glory, - that attractive rainbow that rises in showers of blood, that serpents eye that charms to destroy - he plunged into it, and was swept on and on till . . . . . he now finds himself he knows not where. How like the insane mumbling of a fever dream is the whole war part of his late Message, at one time telling us that Mexico has nothing whatever that we can get but territory; at another showing us how we can support the War by levy and contributions on Mexico, etc." (1)

Even in this early speech of Lincoln's the thought rises uppermost in our minds that he is thinking of a something higher than the mere temporary advantage, though it be such, of his Country. The acquisition of territory, even if possible, is not always right for there must be considered the demands of international justice and

(1) - Works of Abraham Lincoln - National Ed.





friendship. Material advantage is as nothing in the scales of justice, if wrong means subvert the righteous processes. We get a hint of these things here and we miss that hint in the speeches of Douglas, but let us not anticipate too much.

The frontiersman moves to the Westward, largely because of the impelling forces behind him. There is little in his philosophy, suggestive of the idea of permanency, but there is much in his life indicative of imagination, however crude we may deem it to be. The idealism of the pioneer rests not entirely upon the sense of negative dissatisfaction with the past or with the environment, but often is a desideratum in itself - else we should not have such a record of heroic achievements to recall, and a frontier stage of society exhibits far more than the selfish struggle for land and place and power - else the social democracy of the West could never have been the leaven that has so marvelously leavened the whole.

So may we reckon the work of a frontier Statesman who plants his stakes but to remove them again and again, until their forms within the or-





bit of his mind the habit of an undistributed moral emphasis. The ends to be secured are few, but paramount, the whole moral energy of the man has often gone into the selection of his purposes, and in the will to make them good. The conditions of a frontier community are primitive in nature, and the struggle for existence lies very near to the ground. The means that will secure the immediate support, that will secure the desired land, will build the planned for home, are after all those that men come to justify, and the repetition of this process through the years in the growing regions of the West, <sup>(1)</sup> has had its effect upon the character of the individual. The Statesmen from the West have not been free from this lack of moral distribution. They have sometimes seemed to take their own actions and efforts out of the moral zone, and to strive with the very strength of the primeval forests, for the accomplishment of their purposes. True they have had to fight the "little America" notion, in all its narrowness, bulwarked by all its learning and traditions, and rooted in all its documents of Constitutional and legal precedent. The Statesmanship of the West

(1) - West here used, of all movements back from the coast.





did often faithfully mirror the period of its operation, and in it may be found all the virtues as well as the vices of the times. In its methods of procedure there was much of plain, frank, and personal directness, little of circumlocution, less of hiding of real purpose from fear of political reverses. The objects were so apparent to the section and to the Statesman that he could but enforce their support with all the energy of his nature, and this was often unrestrained. (1)

Education and refinement increase the diplomatic skill of men and too often are used to cloak ulterior designs,- and when thus used are but the off-sets to the brag and bluster of the less trained. We are in danger of misreading the real character of the Western Statesman, if we do not pass behind the externals to the man. That which he wishes to accomplish he strives for with all the means at his command, and far oftener than is the case with the Statesman from the East, trusts for success in the impulse generated through personal appeal.

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(1) - Recall John Quincy Adams quaint description of Douglas in one of his speeches before the House, as "peeling off his coat, vest and collar and tie, to more forcibly present his argument, resembling 'the air and aspect of a half-naked puglist'". J. Q. Adams Memoirs XI p 510.





This too is typical of the newer life of the West, where the frontier conditions enforce a co-operation that runs through the whole gamut of experience. From the first moment when two or more families arrived in the same region there is need for mutual assistance, and a social, economic and political inter-dependence arises that becomes a fact of vast importance, as the regions develop and take on National significance. We may perhaps best illustrate this tendency from the history of the public land development. The United States was forced to establish the credit system in payment for the public lands because the individuals were unable to pay cash for the large minimum amount of land they were permitted to buy. The credit system enabled them to pay a small sum down, and earn, off the land, sufficient to pay the balance when it became due. Failing to meet the ensuing payments, the law prescribed that the land should be sacrificed by the purchaser, and again put up for sale at public action, but the sentiment of the settlers proved strongly hostile towards the attempt of anyone to thus





take advantage of a settler's short-coming, to buy the land in, and the result was that often the original settler simply remained fixed on his old purchase. So strong was the feeling against ejecting a settler, once located, that the history of the Land Laws shows a long period of payment extensions, leading up finally to the right of pre-emption.

The same co-operation in the interests of the Western country was observable in the field of politics. There were distinct interests that vitally affected this growing region, and any appeal that was made in the Halls of Congress touching these things would be very likely to enlist the vigorous support of the West. The development of the Whig party, under the leadership of Henry Clay in the West and Alexander Stephens in the South, gives us the opening steps to a more independent and less sectional strain of life. However, all parties alike find their best field for garnering results, to be in the appeal to personalities and interests. The purely legal, Constitutional or strictly historical argument characteristic of the strongest men from the older





States, exercised little real weight before 1850, with the Western States.

Douglas, living out his early days in the almost frontier region of Vermont - where the conversation was chiefly upon the desirability of moving Westward to avoid the hardening conditions of the East - saw his plan of college study fail, and was probably not sorry to move on into Western New York. Even more here did he come under the influence of these migratory instincts, and the thought of the West was ever before him. In three short years he joins the journeying crowds, to Buffalo, to Cleveland, to Cincinnati, to St. Louis, and finally, as was pressed down upon him, in Illinois he seeks support. His practical nature, democratic in the extreme soon finds him a way, and by easy but rapid stages he mounts the ladder of political notoriety, to at last be deemed by his fellow citizens of worth sufficient to serve his State in Congress. His rise was due to unique political talents most clearly manifested through the work of organization - in the capacity to win and hold friends,





and in the unreflective and boundless possession of self-confidence. So far as his State career had determined his future, it was to identify him with the Jacksonian democracy, and to establish his reputation as a skillful political organizer, and his promise rests in this, that he was acquainted with the wishes and the needs of the frontier community through personal experiences gained in the offices of District-Attorney, Register of the Public Land Office, representative of the people, and Judge of the Supreme Court. He had learned through victory and defeat how necessary it was for the candidate who would win, to keep his ear to the ground, and bulwark his positions with the support of the people. This he had ever striven to do in the measures he had championed, but Douglas would never have risen to his unique role of leadership over men fully as bright, and far more experienced and better trained, had he not possessed the bolder power of originality-though it be only of method. The faculty of seeing the weak and strong in organization and in argument constituted a remarkably early manifes-





tation and developed into a predominant characteristic. (1)

His legal experience in Illinois had not given to him any large grasp upon the vital principles of the law, but had simply been an opportunity to practise, in a legal way, the common-sense judgments of life. Within certain forms he dealt out a rude but plausible and fair minded justice, though there can be little doubt that in this exercise politics and not law was the main ambition. (2)

Douglas applied unusual talent to the settlement of contemporary difficulties, such as were frequent in the new regions, and where the need was great for organization. It is scarcely to be wondered at that the problem of organization loomed larger and larger to him, as compared with the questions of mere right or wrong - for his observing mind at once saw that the people knew what they wanted, but were not always equal to the task of devising the ways and means, and the problem of organization, does in very truth, become the major problem in all frontier communities. That Douglas rose so rapidly in the esteem of the people can be traced to the

(1) - His well known attempt to organize the machinery of his party in Illinois is the case in point.

(2) - This comes out very strongly in the conduct of the Mormon case - especially the earlier part of the affair.





wonderful facilities shown in the conversion of the ordinary laws, customs and usages of the time to the actual practise of the current life.

Douglas never seemed to go back of what was, for him, the paramount fact, - that what the people wanted, that they must have, - and there could be no laws or rules that would hold against this, because legislation and regulation were primarily for, and in the interest of, the people. If ought was found of an opposite nature it must be founded on untruth, and not binding. This may seem to be putting it very strongly for Douglas, and we shall have to remember how often the "people" of Douglas meant something else. At the same time Douglas plainly shows that in some of his more powerful moments he is capable of reaching back to this high ground. Had his talent for organization been allowed to develop normally - not in excess - along with a profounder study of the principles of law and government, even as it did in the case of Lincoln,<sup>(1)</sup> it is safe to say that he would have come forth a greater, if not a more prominent character.<sup>(2)</sup> To enable the people

(1) - Bar 2 Sessions in the House of Representatives U.S. 1847-9, Lincoln worked and studied law in Illinois until 1860.

(2) - J. M. Cutts, in a paper of Douglas edited by himself states in the preface, that "it is almost certain he would have been president following the period of Lincoln."





to get and to have what they wanted with the least amount of red tape, was very early a formative part of Douglas' purpose. His connection with the public land office taught him the essential need of the people in a free and new country - the possession and ownership of land - and impressed him with the overwhelming earnestness and significance of this desire. We have good reason to feel that in his public career as an organizer of territories and States, he felt that he was representing some pretty urgent demands - demands that could no more be put off than the demands of a pioneer for possession of soil. The force of this belief, its strength as borne in upon his mind must always be a debatable question, and how far he felt himself to be a servant of the people, and how far the leader of a party, become more and more the engrossing question.

In the famous speech of Douglas upon the Mexican War, now under consideration, we have plainly shown us some faults and some virtues of his methods and his arguments. Douglas in the





Texan Annexation measure had quickly fastened upon the boundary question as the crux of the situation, and was forming also the most debatable ground between the parties to the question. He seeks and finds his historical proofs and with cumulative effect produces them attempting to show that the Rio Grande, and not the Nueces is the western boundary of Texas. He sees in the Mexican War matter that the issue centers upon the question of boundary - that if the Rio Grande is the true Western boundary of Texas the troops of General Taylor, were, in the first instance, when blood was shed, operating upon American soil and had a right there. If this is so then all question about denying him supplies and attacking the administration for producing a war is futile and more over plainly disloyal - deserving of public condemnation. He seeks to throw the animus of popular indignation around those who opposed the hasty confirmation in toto of the administration policy. It is on the soundness of his historical references that John Quincy Adams sought to trip him up, but in an unexpected manner Doug-





las brilliantly sustained his argument and proved that Adams himself, when Secretary of State in 1819, had written to Don Onis, the Spanish Minister, to the effect that the Rio Del Norte<sup>(1)</sup> was the Western boundary. Adams sought to retreat by saying that he was then only trying to make out the best case for his country, as was his duty, but that he never agreed to the Rio Grande to its source, but only some few miles up. Douglas pointed out that the few miles reached to over one hundred and thus included the territory where lay Taylor's troops.

The argument of Douglas for the Rio Grande as the rightful boundary, taken together with that of Mr. Tibbatt's of Kentucky, presented in the House on May 12, and 19, 1846,<sup>(2)</sup> constitute the best and fullest argument for this point of view in our possession. The reply made to most of this by Mr. Hudson of Massachusetts is exhaustive.<sup>(3)</sup> Into an examination of these as historical documents, we cannot go, more than to say that Douglas was becoming an apt student of the methods of the more famous Statesmen of the East. He too

(1) - Rio Grande, Rio del Norte, Rio Bravo are three different names for the same stream.

(2) - Appendix Cong. Globe, 29 C 1 Sess, pp 908-912.

(3) - See also Strong indictment of President Polk by rep Garrett Davis of Ky. in Appendix Cong. Globe 29 C 1 Sess, p 916.





could support his claims with the array of authorities, and the authority of research. It is necessary to keep before us the thought that Douglas may use authorities to substantiate claims rather than to learn the exact nature of the truth. If

so he would not be over particular concerning the genuinsness of some of his evidence, but there was much to be said in favor of the doubts that possessed all minds at the time, over the facts of the boundary between Texas and Mexico. That uncertainty of fact still lingers as a comparison with the vIEWS of Mr. Geo. P. Garrison <sup>(1)</sup> - the official historian of the State of Texas, and of Mr. Charles H. Owen, <sup>(2)</sup> - lawyer and writer on history, may well prove. Unquestionably his argument was able and well calculated to win wavering minds to the support of the claims of the administration.

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(1) - Geo. P. Garrison; American Commonwealth, Texas. 1903. pp 262-4. "Concerning the boundary it must be said that Texas as a province or political division of Mexico, did not touch the Rio Grande, at any point. The line that divided it from the State of Tamaulipas, next the Gulf was the Nueces."

(2) - Chas. H. Owen; The Justice of the Mexican War 1908, p 215. "The Treaty of Velasco (San Jacinto) the armed interpretation and enforcement of it for nine years, the vote of the Texan Congress insisting on the boundary of the Rio Grande, Jackson's Message, announcing that insistence, and the recognition of Texas, with notice of the boundary, had made the boundary between Texas and Mexico, on the Rio Grande and Del Norte, from Point Isabel to Santa Fe -





In this speech Douglas emphasized the boundary issue but dwelt at considerable length on the details of the "Mexican enormities" prior to Texan independence and the Mexican War . He was making out a case for the justification of the war based primarily on the persistent outrages inflicted upon the Americans by the Mexicans, and upon the fact that General Taylor's army was encamped on American soil, at the opening of hostilities.

His position upon the matter of Mexican intrigue and duplicity, of practised barbarities was generally admitted as well substantiated by the facts - was even admitted by many who still opposed the thought of annexation and war - Daniel Webster for instance, - but his position upon the boundary question is more open to question. It was the genuine belief of Douglas that our rights were as good to the Eastern bank of the Rio Grande as they were to the line of Fifty-four degrees forty minutes in the Oregon matter, and that was without any reservation.

A careful examination of the speeches in probably the most clearly defined boundary Mexico had, excepting Sea coasts only."





the House upon the subjects of the annexation and the War can hardly be said to result in establishing for Douglas anything more than the reputation for a certain kind of political ingenuity and power of plausible expression, enforced by a strong and assertive oratorical temperament, but this was a very useful and practical reputation to have gained by the time he was to advance to the work in the Senate.

We have very little evidence of the details of his Committee work, but as Chairman, for two years, of the important Committee on Territories, his name and peculiar talents for organization became well known.





On December 9, 1846 - Mr. Garrett Davis of Kentucky, introduced a resolution to the effect that the President be instructed to furnish the House with orders and instructions given by him to General's Taylor, Wool, Kearney, and Captain Sloat and Stockton, relative to their establishing and organizing civil governments in portions of Mexico which have been or may be captured by the United States. (1)

Mr. Davis felt that the President had taken a high-handed and unconstitutional method of procedure, and wished for investigation.

Mr. Douglas in reply undertook to defend the President. He said the government organized by these men was but the necessary military establishment that has to be set up by all conquering powers - in order to preserve the orderly existence of society, and to save from complete overthrow the institutions therein prevalent. "

"By the law of nations the commander was absolutely required to exercise his power as these men had done:

1 - By establishing a temporary government;

(1) - Cong. Globe 29 C. 2nd Sess p 13.





second - by protecting the personal rights of the conqueror:

Third : by doing this in a manner the most congenial to the spirit and principles of our own Government, as that of the conquering nation.

In conducting the war, conquest was effected, and the right growing out of conquest, was to govern the subdued provinces in a temporary and provisional manner, until the home government should establish the government in another form." (1)

The purpose of Davis was to arrive at the motive and the right of the President to order the arm of the military power to erect civil government in the conquered territory. Douglas turns this aside by saying that "he cared not whether he had or had not any written authority. He cared not a straw whether the President had or had not authorized his (General Kearney's ) course in advance". (2) The main thing was that "he adopted it now it was done".

There is much in this rather off-hand and careless statement of Douglas that reveals a psychological tendency to be unwilling to search back of deeds and words for motives. Are we to believe

(1) - Cong. Globe 29 C. 2 Sess pp 14-16

(2) - ibid p 14.





that Douglas had no deep concern about the motives of men, provided their actions ~~were~~ satisfactory, according to some temporary standard? Have we here a possible hint/<sup>as</sup> to the moral nature of the man? Was he uninterested in the secret springs of action, caring only for the results - nothing for their morality? Did he in truth, care nothing for the sacredness of the principles underlying human conduct, and fail to recognize that these things had an existence? It is perhaps too early to form any judgment upon this aspect of his character, but we may be fairly well assured of the fact that he was too good a Judge of human nature not to know the difference in men along just these lines, and not to recognize that this very difference had wrought well for some men and ill for others. The contest was not far away, when this phase would be mightily stressed, and Douglas will have to know aloud his own soul, and that which moves him to his successive stands, or else he will have to give due credit to others, for the possession of life giving purposes that move to action, above and beyond his own.





Mr. Douglas speaking on March 26, 1846 before the House, meeting in Committee of the Whole on State of Union to consider the "Bill to supply deficiencies in the appropriations for certain objects" said,

"If our government had seen fit to make the proposition of annexation to Texas, and by that means, had brought down upon her an invasion it was our duty to defend her . . . . The annexation policy was a great measure which appealed alike to all our interests, commercial, agricultural, and manufacturing; which was an important step towards driving Great Britain from the Continent, and which, in all its results would promote the glory and honor of our republic. In no district of the Country could the people now be appealed to with any hope of success, unless it was by working upon their passions and prejudices. I speak in terms of strong reprobation and contempt of the manner in which the subject of slavery has been dragged in upon this and upon other occasions by a few members of the House, for the purpose of making political capital in the North. I consider it a species of demagogism, to enable men to get





into Congress, who otherwise would never occupy seats here. He came from a free state, but he believed this agitation would do no good, but on the contrary harm, to all sections of the Country, as well as to the slave himself, and intended to keep up heart burnings and jealousies between the North and South' He had no favor to the fanatics on either extreme, for he believed them about equally fanatical. Was there a combination to dissolve the Union? He would condemn every condemnation of the kind, for the purpose of preserving the peace, harmony and durability of the republic." (1)

One phase in this whole discussion of the acquisition of territory and the prosecution of war we have so far avoided - the question of slavery - mainly because we are following the career of Douglas, and not treating of the merits or developing the history of these great questions. We have, however, mentioned the introduction by Douglas of the anti-slavery amendment in the Texas resolution, and we have quoted his brief dissa-

(1) - Cong. Globe 29 C 1 Sess p. 559.





proval of the introduction of sectionalism into what he called the larger national issues, Beyond these facts, we have nothing from him to indicate that he considers the slavery phase of commanding importance, except in a deterrent way, and as Mr Johnson (1) suggests, it was still possible in the '40ies, to discuss national questions without verging onto the more sectional matters. Douglas proves that it is, and it becomes a very significant fact in the political statesman ship of this man that he refrains from entering upon a topic tinging the speeches of many of the leaders of Congress. That there was a decided minority who believed the Texas annexation and the Mexican War were both engineered in the real interests of slavery may be made manifest by quotations from three representatives.

First let us take the speech of Mr. A. R. McIlvaine of Pa., delivered on March 26, 1846, on the Bill "to supply deficiencies in the appropriations for certain objects" in which he said - quoting from a letter received from a Texan;

"'unless we occupy that River (the del Norte)

(1) - Allen Johnson: Stephen Douglas p 88





there is no locality for slaves West of the Colorado.' Here is the answer, and if War come, it will be to sustain slavery and slave labor. Sir, I opposed the annexation of Texas, not only because I believed it to be unconstitutional, in substance, and in form, but because it was avowedly and designedly calculated to support and extend slavery and the slave power." (1)

Second, take the speech of Mr. J. R. Giddings, of Ohio, delivered May 12, 1846, on the "Bill to raise a company of Sappers, Miners, and Pontoniers". He said:

"When the executive and congress openly and avowedly took upon themselves the responsibility of extending and perpetuating slavery by the annexation of Texas, and by the total overthrow and subversion of the Constitution, and that too, by the aid of Northern votes, my confidence in the stability of our institutions was shaken, destroyed . . . . Sir, those who come after us will look back upon the annexation of Texas, and will pronounce it the grave of our Constitution!" (2)

It has now become an idle mockery for us to speak

(1) - Appendix Cong. Globe 29 C 1 Sess pp 579-81.

(2) - Emphasis his own.





of Constitutional rights. (1) The great charter of our political liberties has been tamely surrendered by our free States to purchase perpetual slavery for the South. (2) . . . With indecent haste, with unbecoming levity under the gag of the previous question, our nation is plunged into a bloody war for the purposes of conquest and the extention of slavery." (3)

Lastly the speech of Mr. Preston King of New York, on January 5, 1847, on adding the Wilmot Proviso to the Bill granting the President money for the conclusion of a Peace, takes up the active principle of preventing the introduction of slavery in all newly acquired territory. He says,

"Shall the territory now free (Mexico) which shall come to our jurisdiction, be free territory, open to settlement, by the laboring men of the free States, or shall it be slave territory given up to slave labor? One or other it must be, it cannot be both." (4)

"The labor of the free white men and women, and of their children, cannot and will not eat and drink, and lie down, and rise up, with the black labor of slaves; free white labor will not

(1) - Emphasis his own.

(2) - Emphasis my own

(3) - ibid pp 641 -5.

(4) - Could this have suggested Lincoln's finer rendering of the same thought? There is much in this speech that may have been of service to Lincoln.





be degraded by such association. If slavery is not excluded by law the presence of the slave will exclude the laboring white men. The young men who went with their axes into the forests and hewed out of the wilderness such states as Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, and Wisconsin, would never have consented in the workshops or in the field, to be coupled with negro slaves . . . . one act of this Government did more for them than all other acts of legislation; it was the Ordinance of July, 1787, by which slavery and involuntary servitude, except for crime, was forever prohibited in all the territory of the United States North and West of the Ohio River . . . . Shall we hesitate to do the same thing for territory where slavery does not now exist? . . . . The mere presence of slavery, wherever it exists, degrades the condition, the respectability, the character of labor. . . . The Bill proposed (Wilmot Proviso) presents no question of abolitionism. With the abolition of slavery the Congress of the Union can have nothing to do, but it would be an equally wide departure from the Constitution, and from





every sound principle upon which our republican institutions are founded, that the Government of the United States should be instrumental in extending slavery in any direction, or in converting free territory into slave territory." (1)

On the other hand not all of the Southern votes were cast for Texas, for there was the opposition within the Whig party. This was not great enough to control many votes, against a measure that seemed to offer such distinct advantages to the South. Alexander Stephens, in his speech, favoring annexation, says that he is "no defender of slavery in the abstract", nor has he any "wish to see it extended to other countries; and if the annexation of Texas were for the sole purpose of extending slavery, where it does not now, and would not otherwise, exist, I should oppose it. This is not its object, nor will it be its effect," (2)

With Pendleton, Stephen's latest biographer, we note that his chief object was, "not a field for the extension of slavery, but additional power for the South in Congress." (3).

(1) - Cong. Globe 29 Cong. 2 Sess pp 114-15.

(2) Louis Pendleton; Alexander Stephens, 1908. pp 63-4.  
(quoted from "Cleveland's Letters and Speeches" p 301)

(3) *ibid*, p 64.





Alexander Stephens, whom we have noted as standing with Douglas on the annexation scheme, separates from him on the policy of the Mexican War, but shows a remarkable sympathy with the expansionist's views of Douglas. "He says;

"I am no enemy to the extension of our domain, or the enlargement of the boundaries of the republic. I trust the day is coming and not far distant, when the whole continent will be ours; when our institutions shall be diffused and cherished and republican government enjoyed, throughout the length and breadth of this land, from the far South to the extreme North, from ocean to ocean. That this is our ultimate destiny if wise counsels prevail, I confidently believe. But it is not to be accomplished by the sword. . . . We can properly enlarge only by voluntary exessions . . . Fields of blood and carnage may make men brave and heroic, but seldom tend to make nations either virtuous or great." (1)

This speech of Stephens is cited merely to show the fact of independent thinking among leaders when the current has set strongly for war.

(1) *ibid* - p 65.





To the South, in general the War seemed to be the means of acquiring sufficient territory to offset the probable development of the North West on anti-slavery lines, - the need of keeping the balance of States in the upper House was assuming grave proportions, and arguments presented to the Southern constituency, based on this need, would have tremendous weight. Douglas, it can scarcely be doubted, had his environment been wholly Southern, would have been a foremost champion of this side of the question, but Stephens, fully appreciating the need of more territory, yet halts at the unconstitutional, or perhaps better, unprincipled means taken to achieve it. He could support the annexation because peaceful, but he was unwilling to claim a territory that was diplomatically in dispute, <sup>(1)</sup> or to favor a partisan war of aggrandisement. The attitude of Stephens throughout the period of the Mexican War, and the Oregon controversy, where he seeks to avoid a war with England, is brave and statesmanlike. Like Douglas, an expansionist in principle, he is a moralist also, and a believer in the fundamentals

(1) - Land between Nueces and Rio Grande.





of the constitution, Presenting a striking contrast to the statesmanship of the Westerner; Douglas aims at expansion, enlargement, and somehow holds in his own mind the idea that this government, the American people, in their progress across and up and down the continent can do no wrong; that the American, a composite of races, seems somewhat superior, that this superiority includes a different system of ethics from the kind Stephens would advocate, when he says: "We should attempt to act on our neighbors only by setting them a good example." Douglas would extend this better perhaps define, the "good example" as a national process of assimilation. We do not mean this to be taken in too derogatory a sense, but it is a distinctly lower ethical viewpoint than that of Stephens. (1)

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(1) - See also letter of Lincoln to Rev. J. M. Peck, written from Washington, in 1848, when he asks on this Mexican War question, and the U. S. acts of "Aggression", would you venture to so consider them too small for notice had they been committed by any nation on earth against the humblest of our people? I ask is the precept 'Whatso-ever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them,' obsolete? Of no force? Of no application?" Writings of Lincoln; National Edition, Vol 2, p.66.





It may have been a lack of imagination on the part of Douglas which prevented him from seeing that the Mexican might be fully as much of a patriot as the American - and might have more real happiness under his own form of government than could be possible, were he transferred to ours. Was it also lack of moral insight that made him think lightly of the destiny of a weaker nation? We look in vain through the speeches of Douglas for the tones of international sympathy, for some real appreciation of the historic evolution of the Nation. There is everywhere present a conception of "manifest destiny" inviting to the defense of every act that shows the marks of material progress. Fortunately or unfortunately Douglas came upon the scene of American politics when the Country was embarking upon a perilous sea - and the hand on the helm at Washington - was weak.

Finally we may cite one or more expressed opinions of the ultra Southern view, which in reality furnished the vitality in the movement.

A writer in the Charlestown Courier of that time says:

"Every battle fought in Mexico, and every





dollar spent there, but insures the acquisition of territory, which must widen the field of Southern enterprise and power in the future, and the final result will be to re-adjust the whole balance of power in the Confederacy, so as to give us control over the operations of the Government in all time to come. If the South be true to themselves, the day of our depression is gone, and gone forever." (1)

Mr. Holmes of South Carolina, speaking on the re-annexation of Texas said:

"Now I put it to the Southerners, As this sectional question has been raised, was it sectional in them to endeavor to preserve those relations which could alone give them connection with this Union? Was it sectional in them to defend those rights and interests which had been assailed by the ruthless hand of abolitionism? Was it sectional in them, with a particular species of population, that was increasing, to protest against the establishment of bounds, beyond which they shall not pass? Their black population now amounted to about three millions; and what would be the condition of the whites when they

(1) - William Henry Smith; A Political History of Slavery, Vol I pp 82.





should expand over the whole country, cooped up within the present limits and without the capability of emigration? . . . Who dare tell us that we are unpatriotic when we resist a construction of the Constitution, that that instrument, while it guaranteed slavery as it existed when it was adopted, imparted no potentiality to its extension, in proportion to the increase of our population, and the wants of the Country? Gentlemen had talked of dividing their country into two parts, from one of which slavery was to be excluded. A Southerner who would agree to this, who would manacle and fetter the energies of his children, must be either a knave or a fool. Admit Texas and give but two slave States, and what would be our condition? With an exhausted soil, and a dense population, which without a field for industry and enterprise, must go idle, let gentlemen figure to themselves the consequences. The North is to have territory, reaching to the rocky Mountains, over-leaping its icy barriers, are to add State after State; while the South will have an increasing and dangerous population, which it can not have





an outlet for, yet the spirit of abolitionism would forbid the South from acquiring new territory, lest it might extend Southern institutions." (1)

And Mr. Wise of Virginia, one of the controlling voices of the Tyler Administration, said in 1842:

"If Iowa be admitted on the one side, Florida will be added on the other, but there the question must stop. Let one more Northern State be admitted and the equilibrium is gone - gone forever. The balance of interests is gone - the safeguard of American property - of the American Constitution - of the American Union - vanished into thin air. This must be the inevitable result, unless by a treaty with Mexico, the South can add more weight to her end of the lever! Let the South stop at the Sabine, while the North may spread unchecked beyond the rocky Mountains, and the Southern scale must kick the beam." (2)

These speeches do but reveal how clearly the radical element of the South knew what it wanted and why, and the opposition of the North arose

(1)- Cong Globe 29 Cong. 2 Sess p 136.

(2) Niles Register; LXIV, p 174.





mainly because it was just as plain to the radical element there, what the Southern support of the War portended. But the radical element in the North was anti-slavery, and it was rapidly allowing this question to enter very prominently into all its political thinking and acting. If the natural course of events was to go on unhindered, the South would be the section seemingly standing for National Progress, and the North would be held as a re-actionary section, devoting its energies to the conduct of a negative fight. This because the policy of expansion was progressive - had in it the elements capable of including the positive enthusiasm of that large number who go about "seeking for a sign" to be read of all men. The moral argument against slavery demands for its successful propagation - a certain given standard of education and a certain settled condition of the Community, two factors that were in the process of achievement on the frontier, but far from being predominant. The frontier and the near-frontier had not become moralized in their political practices by the time of the forties, but allowed the





practical argument of material welfare to have the right of way, and the West stood as a unit for expansion. The South, as an older community and better educated, would have listened far more earnestly to the moral appeal of a man like Stephens had the slavery question been eliminated. This darkened the moral lense of the Southerner upon every issue in which slavery was involved.

Douglas without reflecting upon the moral right or wrong of the abstract question of slavery, at this stage, stands well within the Western "Stream of Tendency" and finds a large support from the enthusiasm of the South. He gladly accepts it at its full face value, and as ardently repels the attempts of the Northern Statesman to break in upon this Union - undesigned and natural - of the South and West for expansion. Ethics are foreign to his thinking, for his statesmanship is of the frontier, - raised by the practical needs of the hour - and to pass when passes that shifting stage.





# LEGISLATION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. Oregon: Expansion compromised-

national limitation.

On February 2, 1943, Mr. Rogers of Ill.

and Mr. Douglas of Cal. introduced a bill to amend the act of August 1, 1941, relating to the subject of foreign-born persons in the United States.

Douglas in the House of Representatives.

D. Oregon: Expansion compromised-

national limitation.

On February 18, 1943, Mr. Rogers of Ill.

and Mr. Douglas of Cal. introduced a bill to amend the act of August 1, 1941, relating to the subject of foreign-born persons in the United States. The bill was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

On January 4, 1943, Mr. Rogers of Ill.

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DOUGLAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Referred D. Oregon. Expansion Compromised.--  
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On February 9, 1843, Mr. Reynolds of Illinois, from the select committee appointed on the subject, reported a bill to adopt measures for the occupation and settlement of the Territory of Oregon and for extending certain portions of the laws of the United States over the same.<sup>1</sup> This was read twice and referred to the Committee of the Whole House on State of the Union. Later in the day it was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

1843

On February 16, 1843, Mr. John Quincy Adams, as Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, reported both the Senate and House bills on Oregon, without amendment, but with a recommendation that they do not pass.<sup>2</sup>

On January 4, 1844, Mr. Owen of Indiana moved a resolution to the effect that the British

1844

1. Congressional Globe, 27 Congress, 3 Sess., p.264.  
2. Ibid., p.297.

# DOUGLAS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

D. Oregon. Expansion Compromised.---

National Limitation.

On February 9, 1843, Mr. Reynolds of Illinois, from the select committee appointed on the subject, reported a bill to adopt measures for the occupation and settlement of the Territory of Oregon and for extending certain portions of the laws of the United States over the same.<sup>1</sup> This was read twice and referred to the Committee of the Whole House on State of the Union. Later in the day it was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

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On January 4, 1844, Mr. Owen of Indiana moved a resolution to the effect that the British

1. Congressional Globe, 27 Congress, 2 Sess., p. 284.  
2. Ibid., p. 287.



Government be given, by the President, the necessary twelve months' notice for the abrogation of the convention treaty of joint occupancy of Oregon.<sup>1</sup>

Referred to Committee of Foreign Affairs, and on January 23, 1844, Mr. C. J. Ingersoll, from the Committee, reported "that it is inexpedient for Congress, at this time, to act in any manner upon the subject referred to in the said resolution."<sup>2</sup> This resolution brought forth considerable discussion.

On January 4, 1844, Mr. Hughes of Missouri introduced a bill to organize a Territorial Government in the Territory of Oregon, which was twice read and referred to the Committee on Territories.<sup>3</sup>

On March 11, 1844, Mr. A. V. Brown, Chairman of the Committee on Territories, reported a bill extending the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the courts of Iowa Territory to the Pacific.<sup>4</sup>

On December 16, 1844, Mr. Duncan of Ohio introduced a bill to organize a Territorial Government in the Oregon Territory.<sup>5</sup> It was read twice and referred to the Committee on Territories.

1. Cong. Globe, 28 Cong., 1, Sess., p. 103.

2. Ibid., p. 178.

3. Ibid., p. 104.

4. " p. 366.

5. Cong. Globe, 28 Cong.,  
2 Sess., pp. 36-7.





On December 16, 1844, Mr. Douglas of Illinois introduced a bill for the purchase of copies of history of Oregon and of California and Northwest Coast.<sup>1</sup> Referred to Library Committee.

On December 23, 1844, Mr. A. V. Brown, for the Committee on Territories, reported a bill to organize a territorial government in Oregon.<sup>2</sup> It provided for a government over all the territory west of the summit of the Rocky Mountains, bounded on the south by latitude 42°, and on the North by latitude 54° 49'.<sup>3</sup> Referred to the Committee of Whole on State of Union.

On January 27, 1845, this bill was taken up by the House in Committee of the Whole, after passing Mr. Douglas' bill for the purchase of Oregon and Coast history of Mr. Greenhow.

1845

Mr. J. Q. Adams, in asking for more time before acting (time to digest the history), said:--

"I wish to have the best reasons given to the world for our taking possession of seven degrees of latitude, and perhaps more; and whenever we take it, I hope we shall have it defined geographically,

1. Ibid., p.37.

2. Ibid., p.63.

3. The 49' was changed to 40'. Reported correctly by Committee but copied wrongly. Ibid., p.201.





defined politically, and more than all the rest, defined morally; and then if we come to a question with Great Britain, I shall say, 'Come on, Macduff!'"<sup>1</sup>

After a long speech by Mr. Brown of Tennessee, in which he cited many American authorities favoring our right to the whole of the territory to 54° 40', and urging immediate action, the House rose from Committee.

On January 30, 1845, debate was resumed upon the Oregon bill, the House having resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole on State of Union.

Mr. Thompson of Mississippi spoke in favor of the bill, holding that it was our duty to extend jurisdiction over Oregon, that Texas and Oregon were the chief questions before the country and the sentiment of the people had settled them in the election of Polk and Dallas.<sup>2</sup> But the question of treaty right to the region was not disputed. It was "how far we can go and not commit a breach of our existing treaty stipulations. Can we erect a territorial government? Can we have magistrates and courts there to protect our citizens? ..... We claim exclu-

1. Cong. Globe, 28 Cong., 2 Sess., p.202.

2. Ibid., p.221.





sive sovereignty by virtue of the treaty of 1819,<sup>1</sup> and by which we obtained the Spanish title to the territory from 49° to 54° 40'. There was no doubt that we could exercise jurisdiction over land so obtained, and we could do it without giving the stipulated notice to Great Britain to terminate the joint occupancy. England had given this construction to the agreement between us, and she had extended the jurisdiction of Lower Canada over all her subjects in that territory . . . . and justified (the action) by the treaty of 1818. Had we not the same right?"

The basis of the above argument by Thompson was the need of our citizens in the Oregon region for protection against the jurisdiction of English magistrates.

Mr. McClermand of Illinois regarded the question as both national and sectional:<sup>2</sup>

"As a national question, it involved questions of boundary, jurisdiction, and protection to the citizens of the United States, as a sectional question it was considered by the people of the valley of the Mississippi a question of border safety, of territorial limits, of relative wealth, population

1. Florida Treaty. 2. Ibid., pp. 222-223.  
land, in future, to prospective settlers.  
2. Cong. Globe, 28 Cong., 2 Sess., p. 222.





and power, as an integral portion of this Union; and in both these points of view, immediate conclusive action was demanded by the people of their representatives."

McClernand then presented the historical argument for Oregon. the bill proposed:

Mr. Owen of Indiana pressed the very significant fact that we had no right to grant lands in a territory whose possession we had no absolute title to, and hence could give no safe guarantee of title, and that it was against both the spirit and the letter of the moral law to pass this bill before giving Great Britain the stipulated notice.<sup>1</sup> No matter if she had granted lands - we had no right to. He was for straightforward work and believed the time at hand to end the joint tenure of occupancy.

Mr. Ingersoll, J.R. of Pennsylvania, objected to our establishing our form of government before the very face of the agreement - that the country should be left free and open to the people of both governments.<sup>2</sup> ..... just cause for complaint.

"I doubt not our title to that country,

1. The bill contained the provision for grants of land, in facturo, to prospective settlers.
2. Cong. Globe, 28 Cong., 2 Sess., p.222.





but I argue for the paramount importance, above every other consideration, of preserving inviolate, our national faith, and untarnished, our national honor."

On January 31, 1845, Mr. Hunt of New York stated that the bill proposed:<sup>1</sup>

"The exercise of the highest attributes of sovereignty; the creation and establishment of a government of full and complete jurisdiction over the whole of Oregon, a portion of which was in dispute between this country and Great Britain, which jurisdiction was extended over all classes of citizens whether of Great Britain or of the United States."

He held that this would be just cause for war on the part of Great Britain. She had made "an express reservation that her acts (of jurisdiction) should not operate over either territory or citizen of the United States," and it would be faithless, in view of the treaty, to do otherwise by her. He was no apologist for Great Britain, but he failed to see where she had given just cause for complaint.

"Suppose the position of the two countries

1. Congressional Globe, 28 P. 2 Sec. p. 224.

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"Suppose the position of the two countries



was reversed, and that the Parliament of Great Britain, without giving us the notice required by the treaty, should pass a law extending the jurisdiction of that country over the whole territory: why the tocsin of war would be sounded throughout the whole length and breadth of the land, if England should attempt to establish a territorial government in Oregon."

A new point of view was that presented by Mr. E. J. Morris of Pennsylvania, who after stating his conviction that our title was good to 49° and could be made good to 54° 40', he questioned the wisdom of engaging this country in a war to defend some two or three thousand American emigrants, and a vast frontier line. Moreover, there would be great danger of war should the bill pass, and then we would imperil Oregon itself. He believed that some day Oregon would be a great republic (not a part of the American Confederacy) but peopled by citizens of our race, and that we should stand ready to protect its growing infancy until it was firmly established.

"I do not believe it to be one of the <sup>1</sup>

1. Congressional Globe, 28 Congress, 2Sess., p. 225.

was reversed, and that the Parliament of Great Britain, without giving us the notice required by the treaty, should pass a law extending the jurisdiction of that country over the whole territory: why the toxin of war would be scattered throughout the whole length and breadth of the land, if England should attempt to establish a territorial government in Oregon."

A new point of view was that presented by Mr. E. J. Morris of Pennsylvania, who after stating his conviction that our title was good to 42° and could be made good to 54° 40', he questioned the wisdom of engaging this country in a war to defend some two or three thousand American emigrants, and a vast frontier line. Moreover, there would be great danger of war should the bill pass, and then we would imperil Oregon itself. He believed that some day Oregon would be a great republic (not a part of the American Confederacy) but peopled by citizens of our race, and that we should stand ready to protect its growing infancy until it was firmly established.

"I do not believe it to be one of the



characteristics of a republican government to seek to extend themselves over a wide area of country. I do not wish to peril the preservation of our Union by crossing the barriers which nature has erected between us and this country."

Mr. Douglas obtained the floor and entered into the longest and fullest discussion of the question so far undertaken by a House member. Devoting himself first to Mr. Morris he replied to his argument against incorporating Oregon into the Union on the ground of mountain barriers. He said:<sup>1</sup>

"The great secret of our success -- the great advantage of our system of government -- was that it provided that different confederacies might be organized into the same republic, divided into states with sovereign powers for local and domestic purposes, but united together for general power and common defense. And thereby we boast of a union preserving peace and harmony among all the members of the confederacy, thus avoiding those dissensions which have proved the destruction of former republics. Our system of government was as well adapted to the whole

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American continent as it was to the thirteen original states of the Union. At the formation of our government, the objection was made that our territory was too large, and the reply was made by the father<sup>1</sup> of the Constitution that that territory was not too large for a republican form of government, which admitted of bringing representatives together from the exterior of that country at the seat of government often enough to attend the regular meetings of the national legislature."

Here is to be found the secret of much of Douglas's work and influence in Congress, the essence of much of his statesmanship. There had been nothing in the experiences of his life -- from a practical or a moral point of view -- to offset the growing conviction of the mission of this country. It is not possible from any evidence so far submitted to say "historic mission" in the larger sense used by eminent scholars of civilization. It is necessary, in dealing with a character like Douglas, to avoid the twin fallacies of injecting motives external to the man in his words and actions -- and of an ex post facto

1. James Madison.

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Douglas, then, while he may not have had any thorough-going notions concerning the ethical functions of nations, nor any profound reflection upon the philosophy of a world-movement, did most seriously believe in material progress as the mission of the United States. In the thought he brings out in his reply to Morris, there is found a deep, underlying truth that has not so far been controverted by our national history -- the truth that the efficiency of our government is not a question of the size of the nation whatsoever, and this corollary -- that the United States Constitution is not simply a restricted instrument, but is elastic. Douglas did not at this time develop the thought that was moving within him, but he is beginning to emphasize a position that is national as opposed to sectional -- perhaps we should

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at present be more correct if we said - large as opposed to small. The current debates in Congress but go to show how fixed had become the notion, among the New England legislature particularly, that the future success of the Republic was dependent upon the preservation intact of the present boundaries. More than a generation had passed since these had been enlarged, and the advantages of the famous Purchase of Louisiana were even now but dimly appreciated. The narrowness of the New England conception was not a lightly taken one, nor was it one resting on superficial grounds. It was rooted in the eternal principles of right and duty, but it failed to gauge the civilization and the mission of the West and to lift its vision to the scope of the American problem. To make good and develop present confines are the recipes of national success, but our national history has taught us that issues may grow out of this process which transcend the hitherto accepted theories of men, and that it is the part of wisdom to moralise the result, rather than to become, through isolation, the foe to further progress. There are crises in the history

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of national life when the horizon seems to be completely shrouded in darkness, and when there cometh from nowhere the "light that lighteth the world." Webster passed through such a period and failed to find that light, with all his garnered wisdom and magnificent intellect. For which failure his beloved New England reviled him, not because she saw the light, but because she failed to reach to the humanity of her greatest son. Lincoln passed through such a period and saw the light in the identification of the liberty of the subject with the democracy of the people issuing forth in a new Nationalism that knows no section, nor race. But Douglas has yet to pass through that crisis, so far as we are concerned, and his practical theory of life and understanding of the people will be guides that do veritable service in his name for some time to come. The principle of political faith that Douglas stressed more and more was the belief in a larger future in a larger country and to the popularization of this creed he devoted the greater part of his energies and talents. He was not one to be impressed with the sanctification of

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method as a legitimate outgrowth of the Constitution. To him, the union of the President and the Senate in the production of treaties for the admission of new states was no more legal than their admission through joint resolution of Congress. This we have seen in the Texas annexation matter. All discussion upon ways and means was subsidiary to the end desired, but the practical workings of legislation had become so complicated by the rules of the political game, and were subjected to such a searching examination by the Constitutional statesmen of the period, that the ways and means became the prominent objects of debate. Being no Constitutional lawyer and having no great acquaintance with the fundamental and underlying facts that form the chain of a nation's permanent growth, he yet was an exceedingly acute observer of the juxtapositions so frequently occurring in history and he was developing a great facility in the manipulation of just these surface associated facts.

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and mental organization that is energetic and assertive, intellectual and dogmatic with a background of emotional patriotism; given a character that has never felt the restraint of a peremptory moral will, compelling and inhibiting speech and action; to all of which is furnished the splendid opportunity of the floor of the National House for operation -- and the case of Stephen Douglas in the Oregon fight is before us.

Mr. Douglas, then, had expressed himself as horrified at the idea of Mr. Morris that this nation would see another republic growing up in Oregon and not make it part of the American Confederacy. Mr. Winthrop of Massachusetts replying to this horror of Mr. Douglas quotes Mr. Benton of Missouri, who, speaking in 1825 of the effect of occupation of Columbia River region upon the Union, said:--

"He believed the Union of the States could not be jeopardized by the occupation of that river, but that it would be the means of planting the form of a new and independent power beyond the Rocky Mountains. .... The military port on the Columbia would

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"He believed the Union of the States could not be jeopardized by the occupation of that river, but that it would be the means of planting the form of a new and independent power beyond the Rocky Mountains. . . . The military post on the Columbia would



be the nucleus of a settlement. . . . When arrived at some degree of population . . . the people would sigh for the establishment of a civil authority. A territorial government obtained, the full enjoyment of state rights would next be demanded, and these acquired, loud clamor would soon be heard against the hardship of coming so far to the seat of government. . . . The republic should have limits. . . . Westward we can speak without answer, and the ridge of the Rocky Mountains may be named without offence, as presenting a natural and everlasting boundary . . . . the statue of the fabled god Terminus, should be raised upon its highest peak, never to be thrown down. . . . Therefore this new government formed on the coast of the Pacific should be separated from the mother-empire, and the heights of the Rockies should divide their possession . . . . . and we should have our satisfactions in what we had given to her of inherited power, and in the way she would conserve our interests, etc."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Benton changed his view point in his 1845-8 struggle for the possession of Oregon. It was not so much a difference in Mr. Benton as it was

1. Cong. Globe, 28 Cong., 2 Sess., p.294.

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a difference between 1825 and 1845 in the conditions of the country, and Mr. Benton resided where he had reason to feel the change. In New England it required vision, sympathy, and a capacity for imaginative growth to understand the change that a generation made in the development of the West. It was necessary that the inhabitant of a highly developed region should return in his own mind to the period when something like frontier conditions prevailed in his locality, if he would have a true and sympathetic outlook upon frontier conditions elsewhere. Too often this demand was wholly neglected, and as a result, the Western difficulties were approached in a spirit unjust and hostile in the extreme. Mr. Benton had imagination -- but had he not there would have been the teacher of practical statesmanship everywhere about him to show him the way. Mr. Douglas had imagination when it came to certain phases of his country's welfare or ill, but as the center of his interest was the West these imaginings rose out very practical interests.

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and speed, and for both reasons there is manifest no little impatience with the arguments that raise issues which have no significance for him. One of these is war -- the fear that our action may provoke war between the United States and England. Another is the fact that our Secretary, Mr. Calhoun, is negotiating with England for a treaty, and while negotiations are pending all discussion in Congress should cease, lest we hurt the diplomatic cause. All having admitted that our title is unquestionable, though not unquestioned above 49°, and England having established her laws over the country in spite of the fact of our ownership, why should we not be allowed to reciprocate, without the fear of war?

"Have we not the same right to establish<sup>1</sup> military posts that England has? Give us military posts, garrison them with American soldiers, and he, for one, would not care much about laws. It was not laws, nor the civil authority, by which possession of the country could be obtained, but it was by military force that we must take possession of it, as well as keep it. . . . He was for preparing for war in time of

1. Congressional Globe, 28 Congress, 2 Sess., p. 226.

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peace, so as to meet the crisis when it comes." And as for negotiations referring to the fact that Great Britain had twice refused our offer of 49° as the boundary, he said: "There is no hope of our getting possession<sup>1</sup> of this country by negotiation. We must get it by other means -- means that shall be frank, open, manly and honest, such as will command for us the respect of the whole world. What are they? First, to erect a government up to the Rocky mountains, and establish military posts in it, so as to extend our settlements up to the Rocky mountains; then establish the territorial government of Oregon, protected by a sufficient military force, and by having the means of transmitting intelligence across the mountains, make the people there know and feel that they are a part of the government, and that its protection is extended over them. Emigration would then increase. Otherwise, the whole region will be abandoned to the British. . . . . He never would now or hereafter yield up one inch of Oregon. He contemplated the country becoming a considerable member of our family. . . . Oregon and Texas

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were like man and wife: when separated the welfare and happiness of both were seriously injured; but when once united they must be kept together forever. We want Texas to protect our commerce in the Gulf; and we want Oregon to protect our fisheries and our trade with China, and to put a stop to the unscrupulous claims of Great Britain at universal dominion."

He then went on to describe the purposes of Great Britain and her designs relative to this continent. Douglas had much of the spirit of jingoism in his makeup, but that in no way militates against the success of his appeal, for what age of our history has not been responsive to such appeals -- even today Hobson has his following. Still the chauvinism of Douglas was based on his positive ambition for his country's progress.<sup>1</sup> All he had to say was - violate no treaty stipulation, nor any principle of the law of nations; preserve the honor and integrity of this country; but at the same time assert our right to the last inch, and then if war comes-let it come. He would administer to our citizens Hannibal's oath of eternal enmity and not terminate it un-

1. Ibid., pp.226-7.

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To the superficial reader of history the achievements of certain races and nations must stand forth in large type, and inevitably assume proportions that blot out or seriously lessen the importance of other factors in the progress of civilization. The history of the world becomes a contention between certain giant forces that move to the execution of purpose with almost fateful power. The doctrine of evolution very conveniently, though in its popular use, fallaciously, supplies people with the understanding of all this movement and it is seen that the contention is a gigantic struggle for the survival of the fittest among nations. Not that the world had never known before that the nation inherently the strongest would last the longest, but that now there was intro-

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duced something of the idea of "manifest destiny" involving the presence of ethical justification for the pursuit of destined ends. We do not believe that this was a philosophically reasoned out process by Douglas, but there can be very little doubt that his historical researches led him to this stand and that his practical nature accepted it in toto.

On December 8, 1845, Mr. Douglas was appointed<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the Committee on Territories.

On January 2, 1846, the Committee on Military Affairs reported "a bill to raise two regiments of riflemen and for other purposes."<sup>2</sup> Mr. Douglas, in urging the passing of this bill, hoped there would be no delay, even should members be anticipating voting against the Oregon bill.<sup>3</sup> The bill would "be necessary for the protection of emigrants on their way to Oregon, and for settlers on our Western frontier, now much enlarged by our annexation of Texas." Some confusion arose here because this bill had been reported by the Military Committee instead of by the Committee on Territories and because Douglas was favoring action on bills reported by the Committee on

1. Cong. Globe, 29 Cong., 1 Sess., p.25.

2. Ibid., p.124.

3. Ibid., p.125.

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Indian Affairs and on Foreign Affairs that also ought to have come from his own Committee.<sup>1</sup> Douglas, therefore explained that there was often cause for "concurrent jurisdiction of the same matter among the committees," and that the whole matter could have very properly come from his own Committee, but though the Committee was appointed "to take charge of the Territorial business of the House; and its province inhibited military affairs, judicial affairs, post office affairs, and everything else which related to the Territories ... all that the Committee wished was, to see that the House took the action necessary to protect our rights in Oregon."<sup>2</sup>

Douglas was not fond of debating on technicalities when these were not introduced as measures of obstruction. In the present case he was preparing for the fight on the Oregon bill and was only too anxious to get the extraneous matter out of the way. And also, Douglas had always manifested genuine interest in measures looking to the protection of those who had risked the dangers of the advance into unknown forests, and over the unsheltered

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"I scorn the suggestion that the peace of my country is to be regarded as a mere pawn on the political chessboard, to be perilled, for mere party triumph. We have seen enough of the mischief of

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"(1) This question, from its very nature, is peculiarly and eminently one for negotiation, compromise and amicable adjustment.

"(2) Satisfactory evidence had not yet been afforded that no compromise which the United States ought to accept can be effected.

"(3) If no other mode of amicable settlement remains, arbitration ought to be resorted to."

Mr. Winthrop did not consider the sovereignty of the territory in question a matter of any immediate importance; it "might remain in abeyance for half a century longer without serious inconvenience or

1. The Democratic Convention that nominated Polk and Dallas.

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  - (2) The lack of sympathy shown by the opponents of the measures for the Western point of view.
- The latter may be the outcome of the former, or it may even be deemed a method of argument that admits of no reply. However it may be viewed, it served to associate the Western progressive with the advocacy



of measures that were morally questionable. The ethics of the situation are extremely interesting and they involve a discussion of the whole historic development of the country into which we have neither the ability nor the time to go. We shall simply call attention to one or two outstanding facts and leave the matter. Mr. Adams, Mr. Winthrop and others are the representatives of the oldest established parts of the country, the products of the highest culture and the heirs of the noblest achievements in the field of political and social morality. The nature of their work is the production of an ever increasing sense of moral, intellectual and physical refinement throughout the country in its political, social, business and professional fields. And why so? Largely because they had come to believe, as they had so often stated, that the nation had marked its full physical growth, and that now the whole energy must be turned to the inward development and the life of the nation must be moralized and made ready for higher duties. To be concerned with any further extension of its boundaries would seriously

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interrupt the chief business of perfecting the inner organism, and would tend to lower the standard. Improve what you have and be not covetous of the possessions of your neighbors, was enlarged from an individualistic to a national point of view, but with the result that it made the national outlook really individualistic and not national. In New England there was the spirit of separatism inseparable from a high development of individualism -- for a spirit that separates individuals as of a world apart, may just as surely separate the larger interests and instincts of a nation. So far as we are concerned in all this, the West felt the separation of the East, and the more that so many of those in the West were children of the East, shut out by the growing hardness of conditions in an older civilization, and at the same time welcomed by the democracy of a newer land. It was inevitable that the point of view of one moving from the old to the new and realizing the added freedom, should change. This is but an old truth that the participants in all migrations come to experience. The Angles and the Saxons felt it; the Normans felt it;

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the Pilgrims and the Puritans felt it; the Cavaliers felt it; and the pioneers from the South across the mountains to the West felt it; so did the children of New England as they moved in ever swelling columns across New York, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and to the Pacific. But those who have remained at home and sought to build up the great centers of power and influence, very often the harder task of the two, have naturally lacked sympathy with what they term the wanderer's lust, and in their natures have reacted against it, and made it hard for those who have gone from the old home.

The need of sympathy does often beget sympathy and the pioneer seeks the help of friends, and gives his own in return. This becomes so predominating a fact in the early life of all new communities that a larger and more democratic sympathy features in this region than in the old, where the problem often is how to narrow rather than to increase the sense for burden-bearing.

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add to the national burden, and apparently bring in no adequate equivalent. There was no allowance made for the tremendous fact that the settlement of the West had generated an unexpected fund of national energy and life that could more than support the extra call made by the growth of the nation's physique. The movement of the population westward at such a tremendous pace created many unsolved problems, but none greater than this of expansion -- first to the Mississippi with the resulting need of the navigation of that stream to the Gulf, giving us the great area of Louisiana; second, across the river into territories of the Purchase, creating a more and more insistent demand for an outlet to the Pacific. No doubt this belief in expansion grew upon what it fed, but it was materially aided by the opposition encountered from the statesmen of the East. There even rankled the unsympathetic, undemocratic note that scorned the easy-going policies rising in so many ways and truly spreading so much confusion over the purposes and plans of the Government. It must be said that this failure to sympathize with the needs of the growing

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West, however well based, did reveal an imaginative lack that brought about a downright misunderstanding of conditions coupled with a failure to appreciate the qualities which were sterling in the Western man. This, perhaps, comes out most persistently in the moral stress which signalises a good deal of the spirit of Eastern criticism upon the movement of expansion, and a great deal upon the slavery issue. Reduced to the lowest terms the question of new land was a practical one to the Westerner and a theoretical or speculative one to the Easterner and the resulting moral attitudes were effected thereby. The moral tone of the West had been lowered by the practical necessities of the struggle for land and the general loosening of the traditional standards of society. It was not yet old enough, as a community, to have developed a morale of conduct that could match the product of the established regions, but it was not wholly wanting in certain supplementary qualities of humanity that were rising into the foreground of contemporary history, as almost new agencies for good. We are only about fifteen years in

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our discussion from the emergence of a Westerner who had much to teach mankind, of a morality that evinced the overflowing of a humanity reaching to all and spurned not. And that hardness which flows from an intellectualized morality was to be merged into the humanity of a moralized sympathy. It was an individualism of character -- moral and intellectual -- needing to be welded to an ideal of democratic achievement. This welding was the work of the years from 1830 to the close of the War, when the final forced association in the ranks of the army broke the wall of sectionalism that had manifested itself from the earliest formation of our government.

It is not necessary, in a thesis devoted to the career of Douglas in the House of Representatives, to go into any examination of the Northern attitude upon the subject of slavery -- that will have its season in any adequate treatment of Douglas in the Senate. Nevertheless, it ought to be mentioned that the growing hostility of the North-East to the presence of slavery in the American system, was taking the direction of making sure that there should be no

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new country opened up to the service of the slaveholder. Much of the bitter opposition to the annexation of Texas and the Mexican War, came because of this moral antipathy to slavery. In many ways the Abolitionists, the most consistent moralists of their day, yet the most impractical reformers and dangerous foes to the existence of the Union, stiffened the moral fibre of New England into an attitude of harshness that bent less and less to the Comprises of the Constitution. Even to a country so ill suited by nature to the propogation of slavery as Oregon, there must be attached in the bill for its admission the anti-slavery proviso. The whole statesmanship of the period was irritating because it verged constantly towards sectionalism, and questions were treated in an individual or party spirit rather than a national one. Douglas, who was free from any moral perplexities or burdens, felt this atmosphere of irritation perhaps as strongly as any one and strove, in his way, to lift the discussion above the plane of sectionalism. His speeches in the House have less of this element than most of the speakers on either

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side, and he consciously worked to avoid the questions that would stir or arouse these feelings. The Texas speeches may even be considered a notable contribution to that phase of Western statesmanship which saw the need of turning into new channels the rapidly heating passions of the South and the North by lifting the cause of Chauvinism into the forefront of American politics.

It seemed to Douglas that the real business of the country was being blocked by the fanaticism of the Northern and Southern extremists, and that it was necessary to nationalize the political thinking of his time. His own patriotism found vent in the vision of a great republic extending, through natural processes, its boundaries to the South and to the West, not to be limited by any restriction unplaced by nature itself. On the west, the Pacific, the future scene of a Great Sea traffic with the world of the Orient; on the south, the Panama Canal and the Pacific and Caribbean Sea, as the opportunities of time might open the way; on the north, fair Canada in its own season of desire. He would not force the is-

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sue in any quarter where was not the admitted right, but he would never forget the destiny of his country. Listen to his words on Cuba, uttered some years later in the Senate:<sup>1</sup>

"I have often said, and now repeat that, so long as the island of Cuba is content to remain loyal to the crown of Spain, be it so. I have no desire, no wish to disturb that relation .... (but) whenever the people of Cuba shall show themselves worthy of freedom by asserting and maintaining their independence and establishing republican institutions, my heart, my sympathies, my prayers are with them for the accomplishment of the object ... (and) when that independence shall have been established, if it shall be necessary to their internal safety to apply, as Texas did, for annexation, I shall be ready to do by them as we did by Texas, and receive them into the Union. Whenever Spain shall come to the conclusion that she cannot much longer maintain her dominion over the island, and that it is better for her to transfer it to us for fair and reasonable terms, I would be one of those ready to accept the transfer ..

1. Sheahan: Life of Douglas, pp.110-11.

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.. (but) whenever Spain shall refuse to make such transfer to us, and shall make it to England or any other European power, I would be among those who would be in favor of taking possession of the island, and resisting such transfer at all hazards."

Douglas could picture to his own glowing enthusiasm an indefinite material progress for his country, and it was in the material development that he was supremely interested. Contrast with this Daniel Webster's statement in his famous "Defence of the Treaty of Washington," delivered in 1846, when he is speaking of having saved to this country the free navigation of the St. John River.<sup>1</sup> He says:

"Now what is this River St. John? We have heard a vast deal lately of the immense value and importance of the River Columbia and its navigation; but I will undertake to say, that, for all purposes of human use, the St. John is worth a hundred times as much as the Columbia is, or ever will be."

Now Webster did not have the understanding of what the country west of the Mississippi meant to the future history of this nation to anything like the de-

1. Works, Daniel Webster, Vol.V, pp.102-3.





gree Douglas had. This is not stated so in order to belittle a man of such national significance as Webster, but rather to show that even the greatest men have about them the limitations of time and place. The early nationalism of Webster had narrowed into a defence of the Union, whereas the idea of Douglas was that the expansion of the country would dissipate the ingrowing evils of sectionalism, and the clashing customs of society would melt away as matters for political discussion, as these broader topics filled the air. The statesmanship of Webster was yet to make one more tremendous venture -- and then fail to stay the ills. Our concern here is with the fact that Douglas saw the importance of the country bound down by artificial boundaries,--and by the statesmanship that protested the conception of manifest destiny, and with his practical nature threw himself into the statesmanship that held as most fundamental the increase of the public domain, and the protection of frontier interests. Douglas was loyal to this principle of statesmanship and it must be considered to be a progressive principle from the view of a larger reason, more of a democracy.<sup>1</sup>

1. Herbert Croly: The Promise of American Life, pp. 311-12.

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mission. Was it not a valid national purpose that this country should want an outlet for its commerce upon the Pacific Ocean? A recent writer of very unusual powers has written that --

"There have been, and still are, governments whose ruin is a necessary condition of popular liberation; and revolution still has a subordinate part to play in the process of human amelioration. ... loyalty (to national traditions) does not necessarily mean the uncritical and unprotesting acceptance of the national limitations and abuses. Nationality is a political and sacred ideal as well as the great contemporary political fact .... It serves as a ferment quite as much as a bond. It bids the loyal national servants to fashion their fellow-countrymen into more of a nation; and the attempt to perform this bidding constitutes a very powerful and wholesome source of political development. It constitutes, indeed, a source of political development which is of decisive importance for a satisfactory theory of political and social progress, because a people which becomes more of a nation has a tendency to become, for that very reason, more of a democracy.<sup>1</sup>

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Douglas was a nationalist in the Western sense -- that is, radical in the thoroughness of his beliefs and in their expression. His ideals had very much of the worldly flavor about them, but they were those shared by a large number of the American people of his day, and he was far more really representative in his progressiveness than many another who was the advocate of territorial restriction. One who looks upon this nation today with its "ocean to ocean" boundaries, and tries to realize the tremendous significance of the American Republic, so bounded, and then endeavors to picture the situation of this country bounded on the west by the Rocky Mountains and a Pacific Republic or Empire, will understand something of the feeling that came to those who visioned the need and the greatness of an ocean bound nation. To have prognosticated the equal of the actual fact, would have been beyond the imaginative power of any in the period of the forties. But Douglas had seen some wonderful developments in the world of the West, and he had unlimited faith and confidence in the people's power to achieve wonders

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in the physical world. He also saw the nature of the life in the East, in many of its more apparent digressions, and with others, though not to such an extent, he criticised these as the fruit of a narrowing nationalism that needed to be rescued through new interests and alignments. The sectionalism of both New England and the South had been forced upon his attention more and more, and were potent causes for his insistence upon the broader platform of expansion. The deeper moral and intellectual problem that confronted the North, and the rapidly advancing incubus of slavery advocacy that was gripping the South, were too large for Douglas to handle in themselves, at present, even had he given a hint that he knew their import. To create new fields for those to go to, who were unable to endure the older ways, was the largest solution his statesmanship could rise to in the season before the Compromise. In thus increasing the bounds of the country, he was at least drawing together the diverse elements of society into a common cause -- democratic in its nature, and akin to the genius of the people. This feeling that pressed

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even more seriously upon the mind of Douglas, that the nation was more than a mere fact, that it had a destiny wrapped up in the past achievements, men were strangely unwilling to admit. Growth and expansion have been the characteristic features of our government from the first, and it was to Douglas but a narrowing vision, or a selfish motive, that could arbitrarily be bold enough to say when there should be no more territorial growth. There are those statesmen whose function it is to inspire the nation -- to go ahead and blaze the way and help point the possibilities that lie in its path. The qualifications of such statesmen are peculiar, even as the qualities that go into the making of a pioneer wood-craftsman are unusual. They are fitted by nature, by temperament and by ambition to be leaders in the forefront of civilization, where the dangers and the temptations are greatest. They are rough and ready; quick and impulsive; impatient of restraints; born to command or to pilot others; of few ideas but these grounded in solid earth. They look forward and not back, and care little for the law of precedent, for which they







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of untold significance whose rapidity of settlement had surpassed all thought, and the statesmanship that could solve the problems growing out of these new conditions must needs know and sympathize with the conditions. Who was it that in the earlier days made the way known to make good the struggle that won for us the regions of Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana and Illinois? It was men who knew what the frontier life meant -- men like Col. Thomas Byrd, Gov. Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Albert Gallatin, John C. Calhoun,<sup>1</sup> Henry Clay, William Blount, and many more. Their acts and deeds of statesmanship were shot through and through with an intelligence that was sympathetic. It was born of an understanding of two sets of conditions -- the settled and the new -- and it knew the difficulty and the gravity of the problem of adjustment. The statesmen in those days were concerned with large problems -- first, those of adjusting the claims of the settlers for land, and then the finding of a market for their surplus products and the securing of the soil from the dangers of a hostile border. Hence the early

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On December 12, 1845, Mr. Douglas moved statesmanship of the trans-Alleghany region centered upon the acquisition of the right to use the Mississippi River. Now when it is seen that this river can no longer form our Western boundary, the same problem is renewed in most of its details, but with the added experience of the past, it moves more swiftly, more smoothly to its goal. First the settlement of the regions held only by the Indian and the buffalo, then the adjustment of claims and protection of the pioneer, then the organization of territories -- and finally, the right of outlet for surplus products, -- and as a protection to the nation's territory. If we concede the arguments that the statesmen of the trans-Alleghany period used as legitimate, because largely inevitable, the product of a destiny that none could fathom, so much we concede that their repetition by the statesmen of the trans-Mississippi period, by Stephen A. Douglas, are legitimate, inevitable, the fruit of some mighty destiny.

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On December 19, 1845, Mr. Douglas moved the following resolutions in relation to Oregon:<sup>1</sup>

"(1) Resolved, that the title to every part of the Oregon Territory south of 54° 40' north latitude, is not upon the Compromise so as to surrender any part of said territory.

"(2) Resolved, that the question of title to that Territory should not be left to arbitration."

The above resolutions but indicate the eagerness of Douglas to put certain standing ground beneath him, from which he could more forcibly carry on the battle. It was a move of political expediency, so apparent that no support was given to the resolution.

On January 26, 1846, Mr. Preston King of New York presented certain joint resolutions which concerned the nation that should be sent Great Britain announcing the period of joint occupancy of the Oregon Territory to be abrogated at the end of twelve months from the closing day of the present Congress.<sup>2</sup> Also that the Committee on Territories be instructed to report a bill organizing a Territorial Government in Oregon to go into effect at conclusion of conven-

1. Cong. Globe, 29 Cong., 1 Sess., p.86.

2. Ibid., p.248.

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tion between the two Governments. have been given, and when Upon these resolutions Mr. Douglas spoke at length, January 27, 1846.<sup>1</sup> He began his speech by deprecating the thought that the issuance of this notice was a war measure. And here Mr. Douglas' position would seem to be very strong. So long as the issue was divorced from definition of the boundary and simply referred to the original terms of the 1818 treaty, renewed in 1827 for an indefinite period, there could be no rightful claim of the measure as one necessarily hostile.

"Sir," he said, "I know not whether the annulment of the treaty may lead to war or not. But, Sir, there is one thing which I do know -- and a thing which is far more important in the decision of this question than the other -- that the giving of this notice will afford no just cause of war."

"The giving of this notice is the exercise of the right secured by the treaty itself. It is the execution of the very treaty. And will it be said that the carrying that treaty into effect, in the mode prescribed by its own terms, will be a reason of war?"<sup>2</sup>

1. Ibid., p.258. 1. in which 2. Ibid., p.258. and possession taken by one party from the other, during the war (1812) be restored.

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United States to exclusive possession under the Treaty of Ghent is revived, and Great Britain cannot-- dares not -- resist the restitution of that valley.

.... Is it then a matter of no consequence which party is in possession while treating upon the title? Great Britain is the party in possession now, but give the notice and the United States will be the party of possession. .... If negotiations should commence and should be terminated because no good ground could be found on which parties can agree, is it a matter of no consequence whether we are in peaceable possession, or whether Great Britain shall be in possession, and we have to turn her out?<sup>1</sup> I insist that the notice is the rightful remedy, that it is the peaceable remedy, that it is the only peaceable remedy by which we can get possession of the valley of the Columbia. .... When we shall have recovered the possession of the valley of the Columbia, our people shall be there in the unmolested enjoyment of their rights, their settlements spreading both on the north as well as on the south side of the river, and upon all its different branches and tributaries

1. Ibid., p.259.

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-- Great Britain will discover that it is impossible to turn us out of that valley, even if she should try."

"But I choose to be frank and candid in the declaration of my sentiments on this question. For one, I never will be satisfied with the valley of the Columbia, nor with 49°, nor with 54° 40'; nor will I be while Great Britain shall hold possession of one acre on the northwest coast of America. And, Sir, I never will agree to any arrangement that shall recognize her right to one inch of soil upon the northwest coast; and for this simple reason: Great Britain never did own, she never did have a valid title to one inch of that country. The question was only one of dispute between Russia, Spain, and the United States. Our Government has always held that England had no title to it. .... (Here he briefly takes up discussion of title) ... we do hold the valley of the Columbia in our own right by virtue of discovery, exploration, and occupation, and a treaty right in addition through the Louisiana and Florida treaty ....."

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"Sir, the value of the Oregon territory is not to be measured by the number of miles upon the coast or whether it shall terminate at 49°, 54° 40', 61°, or the Arctic Ocean. It does not depend on the character of the country nor the quality of the soil. The great point at issue, the great struggle between us and Great Britain, is for the freedom of the Pacific Ocean, for the trade of China and Japan, of the East Indies and for the maritime ascendancy on all these waters. That is the great point at issue between the two countries; and the settlement of this Oregon question involves all these interests. In order to maintain these interests, and secure all the benefits resulting from them, we must not only go to 54° 40', but we have got to exclude Great Britain from the coast in toto."

"There is a principle which has been advanced by our Government which is sufficient to settle this whole question. I allude to the memorable declaration of Mr. Monroe, that 'the American continents are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European power'

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(reiterated) by Mr. Polk." "Any treaty of boundary on the northern part of Oregon, would be an act, a solemn act of 'consent' by this Government to the establishment of a future European colony on this continent."<sup>1</sup>

Douglas then states the future policy (for four years) upon the integrity of the President's word, and the consistency of his character. "During these four years, it is a settled, irrevocably settled policy, that no treaty fixing the northern boundary of Oregon can be made."

"Will this lead to war? I prefer it to the abandonment of duty and honor. Did our forefathers abandon their resistance to the stamp act because it would lead to war? There was a Peace Party in the country, then as now -- a peace party. They only stopped to inquire as to the question of right. .... Sir, the war argument, the war panic, that stereotyped argument of all men that predicate their action upon the timidity of the people -- was used then as it is now. The only question for us to determine is, Is this policy right?

1. Ibid., pp.259-60.

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"First, in demanding and obtaining exclusive possession of the valley of the Columbia River, as a peace-measure under the Treaty of Ghent:

"Second, in refraining from all and any negotiations about the title until our possession shall be restored:

"Third, in maintaining this position of undying, unyielding opposition to any future colonization on the American continent."

Douglas then closes with his diagnosis of the British policy:<sup>1</sup>

"She has got almost exclusive control of the Atlantic and now is endeavoring to get a like preponderance in the Pacific. ... This policy is only to be carried out and perfected by having possession of Oregon and the maritime portion too ... which lies north of 49°, in the Straits of Fuca, Vancouver's Island..... Give up to this power, Oregon, the key to the Pacific, with its harbors, its islands, and its bays, and she is in a position to hold in check all the navies of the world."

1. Ibid., p.260.

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It is in his discussion of the Oregon question that Douglas most fully reveals himself as a thoroughgoing believer in the national policy of "manifest destiny." So far, then, as our relation to foreign powers is concerned, Douglas stands unequivocally upon the Monroe Doctrine, and he would never seek to make it a dead letter, even in the interests of peace. He is a militant statesman and he would have America fill a very large share in the thought of the world. In his interpretation of this Doctrine he is a literalist and would not only check any future colonization upon this continent by a foreign power, but would hold it as a legitimate object — the overthrow, upon the first favorable moment, of all past colonizations, whether to the north or to the south of us. We have already given evidence of the formation of such a radical principle of foreign and domestic policy, but we may permit ourselves to look ahead, some half dozen years, to the time when he is discussing the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty which pledges our faith never to annex Central America, to colonize or to exercise dominion

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over it, or Mexico. That treaty, he felt, in its every article and provision abrogated the Monroe Doctrine in actual practice, for Great Britain has since its ratification planted a new colony in Central America, the Bay Island Colony. And he here gives his grounds for this distinctive American point of view:<sup>1</sup>

"I insist that there is a difference, a wide difference, between the system of policy which should be pursued in America and that which would be applicable to Europe. Europe is antiquated, decrepit, tottering on the verge of dissolution. When you visit her, the objects which elicit your highest admiration are the relics of past greatness; the broken columns erected to departed power. It is one vast grave-yard, where you find here a tomb indicating the burial of the arts; there a monument marking the spot where liberty expired; another to the memory of a great man whose place has never been filled. The choicest products of her classic soil consist in relics, which remain as sad memorials of departed glory and fuller greatness! They bring up the mem-

1. Sheahan: Life of Douglas, p.114.

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ories of the dead, but inspire no hope for the living! Here everything is fresh, blooming, expanding and advancing. We wish a wise, practical policy, adapted to our condition and position. The statesman who would shape the policy of America by European models, has failed to perceive the antagonism which exists in the relative position, history, institutions -- in everything pertaining to the Old and the New World." The above, as a specimen of historic contrast, as a statesmanlike utterance, has its humorous, as well as serious side. It reveals very truly the curious psychology of the man, which explains many an anomalous situation in which he finds himself placed. Where his sympathetic instinct and desire do not extend, then the man is ignorant and wholly without imagination. Humor, a saving factor among the untaught, is a negligible quantity with Douglas, and the contempt with which he was often regarded by his fellow senators was largely due to this very failure to sense his own profound ignorance upon things that lay without his narrow range of interests -- to his

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fatal lack of humor.

In striking contrast with this pronouncement on the European condition let us turn, in the same discussion, to his remarks on a more familiar field:<sup>1</sup>

"I cannot close my eyes to the history of this country for the last fifty years. Then the question was being debated whether it was wise or not to acquire any territory on the west bank of the Mississippi, and it was contended that we could never, with safety, extend beyond that river. It was at that time seriously considered whether the Alleghany Mountains should not be the barrier beyond which we should never pass. After we had acquired Louisiana and Florida, more liberal views began to prevail, and it was thought that perhaps we might venture to establish one tier of states west of the Mississippi; but in order to prevent the sad calamity of an undue expansion of our territory, the policy was adopted of establishing an Indian Territory, with titles in perpetuity, all along the western border of those states, so that no more new states could possibly be created

1. Sheahan: Life of Douglas, p.112.

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in that direction. That barrier would not correct the onward progress of our people. They burst through it and passed the Rocky Mountains and were only arrested by the waters of the Pacific. Who then is prepared to say that in the progress of events, having met with the barrier of the ocean on our western course, we may not be compelled to turn to the north, and to the south for an outlet?"

And in regard to the tendency to fetter our growth by treaties preventive of future expansion, he says: <sup>1</sup>

"You may make as many treaties as you please to fetter the limbs of this giant republic, and she will burst them all from her, and her course will be onward to a limit, I will not venture to prescribe. Why the necessity of pledging your faith that you will never annex any more of Mexico? Do you not know that you will be compelled to do it; that you cannot help it; that your treaty will not prevent it, and that the only effect it will have will be to enable European powers to accuse us of bad faith when the act is done and associate American faith and Pu-

1. Ibid., p.112.

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nic faith as synonymous terms? If you make the Canal, I ask you if American citizens will not settle along its line; whether they will not build up towns at each terminus; whether they will not spread over the country and convert it into an American state? Whether American principles and institutions will not be firmly planted there? And I ask you how many years you think will pass away before you will find the same necessity to extend your laws over your own kindred that you found in the case of Texas? .... So certain as this republic exists, so certain as we remain a united people, so certain as the laws of progress which have raised us from a mere handful to a mighty nation shall continue to govern our action, just so certain are these events to be worked out, and you will be compelled to extend your protection in that direction. ... I am not impatient of the time when it shall be realized, but I wish our policy, our laws, our institutions, should keep up with the advance in science, in the mechanic arts, in agriculture, and in everything that tends to make us a great and powerful nation. Let us look the future

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So certain as this temple exists, so certain as we remain a united people, so certain as the laws of progress which have raised us from a mere handful to a mighty nation shall continue to govern our action, that so certain are these events to be worked out, and you will be compelled to extend your protection in that direction. . . . I am not impatient of the time when it shall be realized, but I wish our policy, our laws, our institutions, should keep up with the advance in science, in the mechanic arts, in agriculture, and in everything that tends to make us a great and powerful nation. Let us look the future



in the face, and let us prepare to meet that which cannot be avoided."

These views are but the fuller development of what has been quite apparent to us from his work in the House. Whatever consistency we may have observed in his answer, this of strong belief in the future greatness of his country in the Western Hemisphere, is clear. Douglas does not pass by gradual and well measured steps to the acceptance of his position. He goes by leaps and bounds that ordinarily defy a logical analysis, and he seems to be nearly as well prepared to announce some policy, and to assert its complete value, from its first consideration, as when a larger experience has brought a larger equipment of facts. There is no hesitancy or doubt in the successive positions he takes, and he is perfectly fearless in stating them. The admirable quality of his fearlessness, which is far more than mere bravado, has yet not touched the highest plane because it rests on no well rounded, or appreciative understanding of the real significance of the question at issue, and the crowding opposi-

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tions which flood the mind of a man like Lincoln at the import of an act, have not to be battled with by Douglas. For Douglas to assume a position and defend it, is not so difficult a task, because he can instantly bring his whole self to the work. And the lack of the spiritual in his make-up smoothed the road over which his directing will drove him, by raising no hard and knotty problems of a personal conscience to first solve. Preparation and success come as easy steps to those unrestrained by other than purely practical motives. And we have been unable to discover a single sentence in the speeches of Douglas during his two terms in the House, that would be ground enough for a single inference, that he was influenced by motives transcending the purely practical. We have found many statements that might be, and have been interpreted in very questionable ways, but no possible interpretation transcends what would be most charitably understood as practical. Vision and imagination he had, but it was the vision and imagination that never for an instant freed itself from its practical surroundings and suggested another at-

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mosphere. It was usually clear, and the wayfaring man, though a fool, could not err in understanding it. He might and did use language that was capable of various meanings -- it might be as full of sophistry as an egg of meat -- but to any one who heard it, it had its supreme practical bent, and the hearer in his own mind, understood what he heard. And Douglas wished for no other result -- strove for no other end -- and rested satisfied that the practical purposes of speeches were justified.

goal. and This was remarkably evidenced in the central thought of his policy of statesmanship -- manifest destiny as applied to the expansion of the nation. In this conception appears most fully whatever of imagination we can attribute to Douglas. The discussion over the annexation of Texas being on in the House when he first entered, at once centered his feelings and he concentrated his efforts towards a practical solution in harmony with the ultimate practical policy of expansion. So in his staunch upholding of the hands of the Administration on the Mexican War question. And still more emphatically

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does he seek to nationalize the policy of expansion in his treatment and direction, for his has become the shaping hand, of the Oregon question.

And was the right of the nation to gain territory until it should make an outlet to the ocean and join its commerce with that of the Orient, to be wholly denied, and the policy of manifest destiny pronounced wholly "unjust, unrighteous, and damnable?" Let us see if Douglas, as an advocate of this policy, was wrongly guiding the nation to its goal, and if his leadership is to be pronounced false, and the goal righteously condemned.

One of the most profound students of the American Constitution was the able author of "The Constitutional History of the United States,"-- Edward von Holst, who, in the discussion of the Texas situation, had this to write:

"The claims which have been founded and<sup>1</sup> maintained on the phrase (manifest destiny), had their historical justification in the proud consciousness that the United States could best solve the peculiar problems of civilization appointed for America, in

1. Von Holst: United States, Vol.III, pp. 269-272.

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the world's economy. The previous history of the Union offered the most incontestible proofs of this . . . . and this sentiment of responsibility before the tribunal of history became broader and deeper and more distinct. . . . . It was not only natural, but it was an historical necessity, that with the growing consciousness and the progressive activity of its creative powers, the republic should set itself broader and higher tasks. And after its territory has been extended thus far to the West, it was a proper, nay an inevitable thought, that its banner must o'ershadow the entire continent -- in its whole extent from ocean to ocean. . . . . In this process, force must often take the place of the good will of the testator. . . . . . It is an established law of historic growth that decayed or decaying peoples must give way when they clash in a conflict with people who are still on the ascending path of their historic mission, and that violence must often be the judge to decide such litigation between nations. Might, does not in itself make right, but in the relations of nations and states to each other, it has, in innumer-

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able instances, been justifiable to make right bow before might. In whatever way the ethics of ordinary life must guide such cases, history must try them in the light of their results, for its highest law is the general interest of civilization."

This is very high testimony in support of a doctrine that in its real essentials is the one Douglas proclaims. And Von Holst has no sympathy or praise for Douglas. But he is a German, and therefore such a doctrine would not sound harsh to his ears. Should it sound strange to an American statesman of the forties? We cannot see that the education or the experience common to men in the West, of that period, would present any insuperable arguments against the theory of expansion, so far as it was confined to the natural acquisition of adjacent territory. We do believe that the spirit of the West was militant in its nature, and ready to set its instant seal of approval upon a policy which seemed to extend the material greatness of the West. There may have been many reasons for this statement, as for instance love of country, of military glory,

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of expanding areas for future settlement, sympathy for the home seeker, desire to increase the Western influence in the national hall of government, and the fear that foreign nations would too greatly hem us in, and others. But Douglas, in his position, was more truly representative of the Western people than those who opposed the movement for expansion, as the votes on all the propositions of this nature will amply prove.<sup>1</sup> This state of things Douglas did not create, but accepted, and threw in his energy and his great talents to further. Who had been the great heroes of the West before his public day in Congress and who soon after he went into the Senate? Andrew Jackson -- a fighter for American right as against all other nations on this continent, and the embodiment of the West in the Presidential office. William Henry Harrison, though a Whig, yet the truest representative of Western Jacksonian democracy, and a fighter and great territorial governor. Zachary Taylor, a Whig, but a fighter and firm believer in the American system. "Old Hickory," "Tippecanoe," and "Rough and Ready" were

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the names to conjure with in the days from 1830 to 1850, and the "Little Giant" was in no sense a stranger in a strange land, in the advocacy of the idea of expansion. This much may be stated as background.

The task of the statesman is, after all, to acquire leadership, that through this leadership he may bring about whatever change he may deem worth his while. However able he may be, or however admirable his plans may seem, this successful launching demands the assistance of a large following in a democracy. This twofold necessity of leadership and platform has caused the failure of many a worthy plan, has caused the downfall of many a truly constructive genius. In our country, where leadership must be of the people more and more as the country develops, there is a peculiar and dangerous tendency, at times almost unavoidable, to emphasize those qualities of leadership which appeal to the popular mind, at the expense of the real content of statesmanship. Our whole history has been full of the attempts of pseudo-statesmen to gain the ear of the people, and

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-- for nothing but the exploitation of some petty plea, or some selfish interest, or some vain and foolish dream, or to hold some office for its own sake. Never have we known a period uncharacterized by this lamentable, and even criminal attempt to hypnotize the public will to the subservience of foolishness. It is present in many ways in our own day, though rarely, if ever, has its spirit been opposed by the spirit of a higher statesmanship.

That the winning of the public confidence is a necessity for the real leadership of the nation, will hardly be disputed, but that the winning of such support is the desideratum and chief end of statesmanship, is a wholly false notion. It is, however, a commonly accepted one in our history. As Mr. Croly very properly puts it -- "Instead of declaring, as most Americans do, that a man may, if he can, do good work, but that he must create a following, we should declare that a man may, if he can obtain a following, but that he must do good work." A politician that meets that requirement ranks among the real servants of the people. \_\_\_\_\_

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But no good work in the political field is likely to be wrought without the co-operation of the people - a co-operation that in a democracy rises into a fundamental. The securing of such co-operation must antedate the prosecution of the work, but in itself will serve to reveal the character of the aspirant for highest honors. Every period of national growth bears upon its surface certain distinguishing marks of popular sentiment, marks that will distinguish the ante-bellum from the post-bellum stage of statesmanship, and to the hue of this sentiment the leaders must give adequate voice. They must come up out of it, as it were, and be a part of it, however far above it their ideals may rise. They cannot separate themselves from the clay of their age, else will they beat their wings in helpless flight, but they must have the support of adherents. There can be nothing dishonorable in the following a man may have if his ultimate purpose be to honestly present to the people the means of achieving their wishes through the instrumentality of his own services. Definite plans of

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statesmanship are the outcome, in most instances, of ability and character plus the given opportunity, and the faith and trust of the people can do no more than place their servants in the path to opportunity. The servant who has a high sense of responsibility, - however great his talent - will tremble at his task, and do his best: the servant who has not sought for the hour of execution, will devise ways and means to turn aside the public glance from the rightful task - and fail.

The period of Douglas' work in the House was one of belief in expansion. The country beyond the Alleghanies, which he represented, had actually been in dispute among four nations since the organization of the Federal Union, and it was for a time very seriously questioned whether we had the right to cross the Alleghanies and organize territories and states. The opposition to this movement towards the west came naturally from those regions along the coast which were becoming thickly settled and which were entirely concerned over the success of their own governments, local and state. The national feeling

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was very weak, and any movement that should carry away the laboring strength of the original colonies would meet the firm resistance of the old settlers, for they knew nothing of a nationalism that was capable of uniting them all in a common purpose. The assistance offered to this migratory movement came largely from those who had settled in the back country of the colonies, the upland region, known as the Piedmont region, south of New England, and the great valleys and the New England Plateau. From these sections the mountains were pierced, and roads were opened into the region of what is now Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio. But the interest of the East in the development of these western lands continued to be hostile, so that by the time of the Revolution there was a decided sentiment of division on the part of the country in its enthusiasm for the war. However, the work of George Rogers Clark in Illinois, of the western men in the battle of King's Mountain, and the energy of the frontiersmen from the German regions of New York, and of the Vermont boys in the

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Saratoga campaign, plainly told upon whom Washington was leaning for final success. But the aim of the Revolution fell far short of producing national unity. Though the results of the war might seem to give us a clear right to the Mississippi River, based on the English title following the French War and the Peace of 1763, yet it was not in any way apparent. The English maintained complete possession of the Lake region, and their Indian treaties constantly incited the Indians to resist all American advances, for had not the Indian Boundary Line of 1763<sup>1</sup> sacredly pledged the natives the use of their hunting grounds? And the unwillingness of the old States to sacrifice any of their ancient charter rights<sup>2</sup> to the formation of new States and their failure to in any way sympathize with the struggles of the pioneers in the upbuilding of the West, all served to develop the spirit of separation which was seized upon by both France and England. The outlet in the West was the Mississippi River, and this was controlled by Spain and France - could these countries swerve the western states from the Union by offering them

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"The real question was whether the control of the entire Mississippi Valley and the Gulf of Mexico should fall to France, England, or the United States. And the fate of Spanish America hinged upon the decision. The river is not a barrier, and hence not a perfect boundary..... The danger was a real one .... and a European power might have arisen along the Mississippi Valley and the Gulf of Mexico, dominating the interior by its naval force, and checking or preventing the destiny of the United States as arbiter of North America, and protector of the American system for the New World."

Washington's strong stand on the Genet<sup>2</sup> mission and the proclamation of neutrality as the American attitude towards foreign powers, and the completion of the Jay Treaty which provided for the evacuation of the forts on Lake borders by the British, cleared

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(1) Hostility of feeling on the part of the East - as the older and settled community - towards the West - as the newer and freer community - resulting in the snapping of bonds of sympathy.

(2) The growing need of the West for an outlet to foreign ports that it may receive and ship produce more quickly and more cheaply than by passage over the mountains to the Atlantic Coast.

(3) The ambition on the part of France to regain, from Spain, the Louisiana Territory, accomplished in 1800, and to control the land west of the Alleghanies; on the part of Great Britain to keep an Indian country as a barrier between the Ohio River on the south and the Alleghanies on the east, that they might retain possession of the Lakes and the upper waters of the Mississippi, and have a continuous field for fur trading.

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The strong executive administration of Washington and Hamilton tided over the dangers of the period and brought a breathing spell to the growing nation. But the arm of authority was not relished, nor understood, by the West, and it was felt that all governmental coercion was in the interest of eastern domination. The Hamiltonian system with its admirable lines of Federal power, yet lacked the element that would have drawn the West - a sense for democracy. The time had not come when a strong central government could be operated in the interests of the whole people. Jefferson, as a democrat, came into power, but in the purchase of Louisiana placed himself at the head of a Federal machine, and also turned the tide of Americanism across the Mississippi River. From that moment the West looked upon the land to the ocean as the property of the country. The uncertainty of boundaries both to the south and to the west, gave a certain validity in the minds of the exponents of expansion, to the future claims for territory. For the rest, it was but the growth of a local condition into a national sentiment, so natural

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and so irresistible as to be rejected by but few who came under its influence. The War of 1812 was primarily a western war, signalized by the victory of Jackson at New Orleans, as against the burning of the Capitol at Washington.

It was the period following this war that crystallizes the American spirit and which<sup>1</sup>

"was developed in the new commonwealth that sprang into life beyond the seaboard. In these new western lands the Americans achieved a boldness of conception of the country's destiny and democracy. The ideal of the western man was the emphasis upon the worth and possibility of the common man, its belief in the right of every man to rise to the full measure of his own nature, under conditions of social mobility."

Into a country which was settled and organized in spite of the arguments and efforts of the statesmen east of the Alleghanies, who were for the conservatism of the internal forces of the old limits, came Stephen Douglas from a state that had held its fron-

1. F. J. Turner, in American Historical Review, Vol. XI, pp. 303-27. Colonization of the West.

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tier character to a remarkably late period. He had no stock of ideas that he would have to abandon or that he felt impelled to unload. His political creed was the accepted one of the West and his business came immediately and at first hand - float with the tide and help push. He needed no urging and the record of his political offices shows how apt he became in the art of adaptation. He could become a student also of the thing that interested him, and the West had seized him and had made him her own. It was, therefore, a very natural philosophy to uphold, - this idea of manifest destiny - for had the Westerner not sought to maintain it against tremendous odds, we should have had, beyond question, the foreigner to the east of the Mississippi. There were some<sup>1</sup> who early stood by the purposes of the frontiersman and bravely backed him up in the legislative and the executive branches, but the contest was very unequal, and the first and best support had to come from the individual colonies. But how important has been this growth of the country! How largely solvent of the ills of time has been the con-

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stant distribution of the population! How much more significant of enlarging and ennobling opportunity has the spreading of population over wide and new areas been, than the concentration of these people within the centres of dense settlement. And the opportunity of the reaction of the frontier upon older regions, in regard to manners and customs and political methods, is perhaps the most noticeable fact. Today we are in the midst of one of these reactions, almost impossible in a small country bound by influences too nearly akin. A very keen political critic has said: "that the agency which gave democracy its first great impulse in the United States and has contributed most powerfully in the product of a phenomena - the American society - was neither the origin of colonists, nor circumstances attending the coming, nor religious belief, but the great change in the distribution of the population which began after the Revolution." Again he says: "De Tocqueville and others believe that the incentive to excellence is always due to patronage and

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encouragement of aristocracy, while democracy is content with mediocrity. But the real incentive is desire of distinction. There is not a masterpiece in literature, art, or science that is not due to this desire. Is not this desire most present to all in a democracy? Is there not the desire to grasp the prize that only the few can try for in an aristocracy, an incentive for the many?"

The power and influence of the United States may be due to many causes, but they rest for their best realization upon the size and diversity of the country. The waves that lap the eastern and western shores of the Republic are no more continuous and persistent in their endlessness, than the waves of changing thought and feeling that sweep back and forth across the wide stretches of land inhabited with its homogeneous human freight. Far, far quicker does the manifestation of a joy, or the presence of a fear at one end of the land, find its way to the other, than if some foreign power juttred its possessions up through the area. But all this stretch of territory has not come for the asking. All this

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basis for mutual exploitation of common interests has not been the gift of the prejudiced gods. There has been fighting, and struggle, and sacrifice, and cruel torture, and weary, weary waiting before it has come. And there have been statesmen who believed in this expansion of the country, and who were very plain about it in the Congresses of the people. They represented the ideas of those amongst whom they lived, and they looked not so much behind them as ahead of them. They were not trained to a belief in the sacredness of the Constitution, nor did they allow their moral convictions to thwart their practical desires, or to go so far ahead of them that the satisfaction of the conscience became a distinct problem. Civic righteousness was not a western trait, but there was a genuine honesty of conviction that squared with the needs of the hour and the people, that furnished an ever present undercurrent of motive. The suspicion on the part of the East often aroused the worst traits of the West, by assigning to them mercenary motives that did not stand the test. It is often true that human nature

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is so obstinate a thing that if we seek to understand the point of view of an opponent, we proceed to put ourselves in his place - and with our own complete psychological outfit - giving us naturally queer and often ludicrous results. If a man of certain temperament simply puts himself in the place of another, without making the temperamental allowance, he is finding out, what he knew to start with, that he was hostile, or friendly, or neutral, to the other's position. And the New Englander of the forties found it impossible to grasp the western point of view,<sup>1</sup> and therefore misunderstood him, and said plain and harsh words about him - words that would have rung truer if the Westerner had been merely a transplanted New Englander. The Westerner, on the other hand, was often sorely stung by the taunts of the Easterner, for he felt the truth of what was intended.

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C. J. Ingersoll, Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, January 5, 1846.<sup>1</sup> The resolution became the theme for almost daily discussion upon all the phases of the Oregon question, this, together with the bill to protect the rights of American settlers in the territory of Oregon, formed the basis of the discussion on April 17, 1846, just as the information was brought that the Senate had passed the House resolution of notice, with an amendment. In defense of the bill of protection which he had brought in, Douglas, in reply to Mr. Chapman of Alabama, said that the bill did not commit the country to the line of 54° 40'.<sup>2</sup>

"Because of the controversy of opinion (as to boundary line) and inasmuch as it was necessary to bring a majority of this House to the support of some measure for the protection of our citizens there, and inasmuch as all our settlers are upon that portion of our country to which our title is indisputable, it was thought best to leave the question of title open, fixing no boundary .... Our laws,<sup>3</sup>

1. Cong. Globe, 29 C. 1 Sess. p. 138

2. Ibid, p. 685.

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under this bill would be executed just as far as our settlements extend; they would expand as our settlements increase. Their execution at first would be south of the Columbia; when our people spread over it, they would go with them; and when we found the Indians and the fur bearing animals receding from our settlements, we would find the Hudson Bay Company following them, and our settlements would take their place..... He could not express positively the conviction that no collision would arise, but he thought it unlikely, as the bill provided for the sending of our justices of the peace, our Indian agents, and other ministerial agents into that country. Our Superintendent of Indian Affairs would execute our laws under the direction of the President. In fine, it gave people law where there was no law. ... It was susceptible of being made one of the most efficient and powerful bills ever passed by Congress."

In reply to the position of many that the bill promises a grant of land to the settlers before actual possession is secured, Douglas says:-

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that there is no distinction between the promise to grant and the grant of lands itself. It is a debatable point. The treaty of joint occupation to some extent merged the sovereignty of the soil and left it in abeyance. The grant of land was a high act of sovereignty, and hence a violation of the convention, but as we claimed we owned the country, and there was some part over which none would dispute our claim, a promise could be made that when this encumbrance arising out of the joint occupancy shall be removed - when the sovereignty shall be brought back to its original position with us, then we will make the grant. It was like a bond that you will convey a piece of land without encumbrance, when the encumbrance which is now upon it is removed. ... Another objection to striking out this 'promise to grant' is that every bill heretofore introduced into Congress had made promise of lands hereafter. Our people have gone there and settled under faith of this action. If they refused now to carry it out, they discourage settlement, and thus weaken our force in that territory."

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The extension of the jurisdiction of Iowa territory over Oregon naturally raised the question of what the status quo would be if Iowa should become a state and throw off the territorial regime. Mr. Douglas answered this by saying - "to create a new territory and attach Oregon to it."<sup>1</sup> Douglas goes on to say, and this has some significance for his later Senatorial career:

"We were in more danger of war by this want of activity and harmony and union in assertion and defense of our rights, then, than from any other cause. If war ever grows out of this Oregon question it will grow out of the fact that these compromises have increased the British pretensions so much that we can never make an honorable settlement of the question. It was the compromisers who were the war men, not from design but from timidity, from want of resolution."

On the following day, April 18, 1846, the bill was passed, ayes 104, nays 64. Mr. Douglas not voting because of absence on duty, coming in as the

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vote was announced. As this bill was a Douglas, product, coming from the Committee on Territories, we will enumerate its items as showing the nature of his Committee work.<sup>1</sup>

Section 1. Extends the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Iowa and the laws of said territory over the Oregon region between 40° and 43° N. L. but this must not interfere with rights of British subjects.

Section 2. The country so described to be one judicial district.

Section 3. The President is authorized to appoint the requisite number of judicial and ministerial officers for the execution of the laws.

Section 4. "That provision shall hereafter be made by law to secure and grant to every white person, male or female, over the age of eighteen years, 320 acres of land; and to every white person, male or female, under the age of eighteen years, 160 acres of land, who shall have resided in the said territory.... for five consecutive years, to commence within three years from the passage of this Act...."

Section 5. Provides for the appointment of Indian

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Section 6. Provides for the erection of block houses, stockades and military posts, "to protect emigrants, settlers and traders, on the route to and in the territory of Oregon, against Indian depredations and aggressions, and to furnish such ammunition and supplies as shall be necessary for defence."

Section 7. To establish post routes.

Section 8. For the transportation of the public mails.

Section 9. "That the sum of one hundred thousand dollars be, and the same is hereby, appropriated to carry the provisions of this act into effect."

In the first session of the twenty-ninth Congress<sup>1</sup> there were four attempts to introduce a bill to provide for the territorial government of Oregon.

First, on December 15, 1845, Mr. Bowlin of Missouri moved to suspend the rules prescribing the regular order of business, to enable him to move for leave to introduce his bill, but the House refused to suspend.

1. Cong. Globe, 29 C., 1 Sess. p. 52

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Second, on January 9, 1846, Mr. Bowlin again moved and obtained leave to introduce a bill to organize a territorial government in Oregon, which was read twice, by its title only, and on suggestion of Mr. Douglas, was referred to the Committee on Territories, which was then considering the subject pursuant to reporting a bill.<sup>1</sup>

Third, on August 5, 1846, Mr. Bowlin moved the bill #97 to organize a government in the territory of Oregon.<sup>2</sup>

Fourth, on August 6, 1846, Mr. Douglas, after the House had listened to the message from President Polk which communicated "the copy of a convention for the settlement and adjustment of the Oregon question, between the United States and her Britannic Majesty", and his recommendation "at the earliest possible period for the organization of a territorial government in Oregon"<sup>3</sup> asked that he be allowed by the unanimous consent of the House to report the Bill and to have it considered in connection with the Message. It simply provided for the regular

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1. Cong. Globe, 49 C., 1 sess. p. 172.  
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form of a territorial government. Mr. Douglas, by unanimous consent, reported the bill and it was read twice by title. Mr. Thompson of Pennsylvania moved the anti-slavery amendment, and the bill and amendment were referred to the Committee on the Whole for discussion. After some other business the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, on motion of Mr. Douglas.<sup>1</sup>

The discussion that followed has a certain interest for us. The agreement entered into between the two governments through their agents, Mr. James Buchanan and Mr. Richard Parkinham<sup>2</sup> had definitely settled upon the extension of the line of 49th parallel of north latitude, which the Webster-Ashburton treaty had brought up to the Rocky Mountains, to "the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island; and thence southerly through the middle of the said channel, and of Fuca's Straits to the Pacific Ocean: Provided, however, that the navigation of the whole of the said channel and straits south of the forth-ninth parallel of north latitude remain free and open to both parties."<sup>3</sup>

1. Cong. Globe, 29 C., 1 Sess. p. 1200.

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There was also the provision allowing the Hudson Bay Company to navigate the Columbia.

Mr. John Quincy Adams objected to the bill of Mr. Douglas<sup>1</sup> because it did not include the specification of the boundaries other than to say:- "all the territory of the United States west of the Rocky Mountains." To which Mr. Douglas replied that "he was ashamed of the boundary of 49°, and instead of making mention of it preferred to report a bill defining the boundary" in the general terms now fixed on the south by a treaty with Mexico; on the north by a treaty with Great Britain; on the west by the Pacific and on the east in specific terms. He declined to write down the boundary of 49°.

Mr. Adams stated<sup>2</sup>:

That a permanent right to the navigation of the Columbia river on the part of Great Britain is one of the things to which I would never have assented. I hope the treaty is such that we can maintain the right to navigate to be only temporary. If I should live to that time - and God knows I shall not - I

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Mr. John Quincy Adams objected to the bill of Mr. Douglas<sup>1</sup> because it did not include the specification of the boundaries other than to say: "all the territory of the United States west of the Rocky Mountains." To which Mr. Douglas replied that "he was ashamed of the boundary of 49°, and instead of making mention of it preferred to report a bill defining the boundary" in the general terms now fixed on the south by a treaty with Mexico; on the north by a treaty with Great Britain; on the west by the Pacific and on the east in specific terms. He declined to write down the boundary of 49°.

Mr. Adams stated:

That a permanent right to the navigation of the Columbia river on the part of Great Britain is one of the things to which I would never have assented. I hope the treaty is such that we can maintain the right to navigate to be only temporary. If I should live to that time - and God knows I shall not - I

1. Cong. Globe, 29 C., 1 sess., p. 1801.  
2. Ibid., p. 1801.



would go to war with Great Britain rather than agree to the permanent navigation by her of the Columbia River ... I declare my firm belief of the right of the United States to the boundary on the north of 54°40'." the other side of the mountains.

Mr. Douglas now gives us an explanation of the provision of the Oregon bill which reveals the ordinary process in this field of statesmanship. He said:<sup>1</sup> "The bill was a simple proposition for the establishment of a territorial government west of the Rocky Mountains, to be called the territory of Oregon. In drawing the bill he had had reference to the various charters for the territorial governments that had existed in this country, and especially in the northwest, commencing with the Northwest Territory, and embracing those of Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Iowa. He found all these territorial governments had been based on the same principles, and had the same general provisions running throughout their charters. There had been slight modifications made as experience had indicated necessary; territorial government, such as we have in other terri-

1. Cong. Globe, 29 C., 1 Sess., p. 1203.

*For the Diplomatic History Oregon question  
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and of all of them he believed that of Iowa was most perfect. Hence he had made it a mere abstract of the territorial government of Iowa, with a few such changes only as were necessary to adapt it to the territory the other side of the mountains.

There was a greater propriety in this for this reason: the people of Oregon had established for themselves a provisional government... under which they could be governed until the government of their native country should prescribe one for them..... He found they took many and nearly all the statutes of Iowa, and declared them of full force in the territory of Oregon... and these constituted a code of laws for the government of the people of Oregon.... Hence the present bill provided that the laws now existing in the Territory of Oregon by authority of the provisional government, should continue in force and be valid until modified, amended or repealed by the government proposed to be adopted.... Consequently, in fact this bill makes no sudden change, but gradually changes their existing government into a territorial government, such as we have in other terri-

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tories..... The usual powers of legislation are conferred upon the Legislative Council of Oregon ... When a law is passed by the Oregon Legislature it shall be reported to the Congress of the United States, and unless disapproved by Congress, shall become the law of the land."

After the offering of several amendments, among which was Mr. Thompson's,- "And neither slavery nor involuntary servitude shall ever exist in said Territory, except in the punishment of crimes," agreed to 100 ayes, nays uncounted, the Committee rose and reported the bill and amendments to the House.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Douglas moved the previous question, and the voting on the amendments was ordered. All were carried, the anti-slavery vote being taken by ayes and nays - 108 for and 43 against, - Mr. Douglas not voting. The bill, as amended, passed.

No reason is to be found for this failure of Douglas to vote upon the anti-slavery provision, though he voted on the amendment to grant a township to the widow of Captain Gray, the discoverer of Oregon, and voted nay. Still, much emphasis cannot be laid

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upon this fact because it was felt that the country was wholly unsuited by nature to the propagation of slavery. The 43 votes are from the southern and western states, including three from Pennsylvania, one from Indiana and two from Illinois.

This bill failed in the Senate by reason of the conclusion of the session before its consideration could be taken up.

On December 23, 1846, Mr. Douglas from the Committee on Territories reported a bill to establish a Territorial Government in Oregon, which was twice read and referred to Committee on the Whole on State of Union, , and made the special order of the day for Tuesday, January 5th.

On January 11, 1847, (postponed from the 5th) in Committee of the Whole, the Oregon bill was taken up, and there being objection to the unrestricted quality of the suffrage, the debate went over to the next day when Mr. Douglas proposed the amendment, which was agreed to as follows:-

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"That every free white male inhabitant above the age of twenty-one years, who shall have been resident of said territory at the time of the passage of this act, and shall possess the qualifications hereinafter provided, shall be entitled to vote at the first election, but the qualification of voters at all subsequent elections, shall be such as shall be prescribed by the Legislative Assembly: Provided - that the right of suffrage shall be exercised only by citizens of the United States and those who shall have declared on oath before some court of record, their intention to become such, and shall have taken an oath to support the Constitution of the United States and the provisions of this act."<sup>1</sup>

The necessity of such a provision was apparent from the fact of alien population, although at the time this could have hardly been more than one-tenth of the population.

The position of Douglas upon this question had been made a matter of record when he spoke in the House on December 30, 1845,<sup>2</sup> against the amendment

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 2. " " 29 C., 1 " p. 113.

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"Some states require citizenship as a pre-requisite to voting, while others again throw wide open their doors to the friends of liberty from every clime, even before they become naturalized." This was the custom of Illinois and Michigan.

"Congress might alter the naturalization laws, ... but do what it would, it could never reach the sacred right of suffrage, that was reserved to the States. The right to regulate the election franchise was the most vital and essential element in our system of civil liberty - it formed, in fact, the basis of our system of free government."

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Mr. Hamlin of Maine wished to add to the amendment a proviso that -

"Nothing herein contained on the subject of slavery shall be construed as intending to interfere in any wise with the provisions or spirit of the Missouri Compromise."<sup>1</sup>

In support of this Mr. Hamlin said he would vote for it because:

"If this was not inserted slavery would creep into this territory as certainly as ever Satan crept into the Garden of Eden. ... It was time now that it should be fully understood; that the resolution had been taken, and would prevail in all the free states of the Union, that there should be no more slave territory admitted into the Union or suffered to exist there."

Although the amendment to which this proviso of Mr. Hamlin's was at once withdrawn, the slavery issue was raised on the Oregon question, and at the session next following, January 14, 1847, Mr. Burt of South Carolina took up the question and argued at great length the right of the states as against the inter-

1. Cong. Globe, 29 C., 2 Sess., pp. 172-180.

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3. Ibid., p. 187

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As the bill contained the anti-slavery proviso,  
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The Oregon bill as passed by the House came before the Senate and on the 25th of January, 1847, was submitted to the Senate Committee on Territories with several amendments, and on the 29th of January was recommitted to the Committee on Judiciary for correction of errors in the amendments. On February 10, 1847, this Committee reported the Oregon bill with amendments, and on March 3, 1847 it was voted to lay the bill on the table 26 - 18.<sup>2</sup> This was the last day of the session and the bill failed. There was practically no discussion of the bill in the Senate.

Into the Senatorial career of Mr. Douglas we do not propose to enter more than to briefly follow up the prosecution of the Oregon matter by him to a successful conclusion. The Legislature of Illinois had elected Mr. Douglas to the National Senate, in spite of his youth and over the heads of several

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In this first session of the 30th Congress there were some weighty names in the Senate, as -

John P. Hale of New Hampshire  
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 John M. Niles, of Connecticut  
 John Dix and D.S. Dickinson, of New York  
 Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania  
 John M. Clayton, of Delaware  
 J. M. Mason and R.M.T. Hunter of Virginia  
 John C. Calhoun, of South Carolina  
 J. Mc Bernier, of Georgia  
 J.J. Crittenden and J.R. Underwood, of Kentucky  
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1. Cong. Globe, 30 Cong., 1 Sess. p. 21

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On January 10, 1848, Mr. Douglas presented a bill for the organization of a territorial government in Oregon, by courtesy of Mr. Hannegan of Indiana, who had drawn up the bill, and was given charge of it. It was read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred to Committee on Territories.

On February 7, 1848, Mr. Douglas from the Committee on Territories reported the Oregon bill without amendments.<sup>1</sup>

On April 20, 1848, Mr. Douglas from the Committee on Territories reported a bill for the establishment of a territorial government of Minnesota; reported a bill for the establishment of a territorial government of Nebraska; moved that the Oregon bill be made the special order of business for Wednesday next, which was agreed to.<sup>2</sup>

It was not until May 31, 1848, that discussion upon the Oregon bill was reached. The question of haste was raised by some of the Senators but Mr. Benton of Missouri pled for immediate relief to<sup>3</sup>

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2. Ibid., p. 658.  
3. Ibid., p. 404.



3,000 miles who have deserved well of their country for their enterprise ... The effect of a long delay (in passing the bill) is to be attributed to the mixing up of this question (with others). The law of nature and the law of the people are opposed to the admission of slavery there."

Mr. Hale of New Hampshire thought:<sup>1</sup>

"The best way was to meet the question<sup>2</sup> at once. Human freedom and slavery must come into conflict... He would not be intimidated, whether sane or insane, from pressing this question whenever he could in defiance of all political consequences. If this Union, with all its advantages, has no other cement than the blood of human slavery, let it perish." To which Mr. Hannegan of Indiana replied:<sup>3</sup>

"He regretted that the Senator from New Hampshire should have taken, at this moment when we are appealed to by the cries of victims of both sexes, sinking under the knife of the assassin, a course calculated to allay relief, by introducing this pestiferous question." Mr. Calhoun<sup>4</sup> favored action

1. Cong. Globe, 30 C., 1 Sess., p. 805

2. Slavery.

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giving a government to Oregon "immediately". The question was put over until the following day when discussion was renewed by Messrs Bright, Hale, Foote, and others, over the fact that slavery being prohibited in Oregon by the existing laws will also be prohibited by the bill under discussion if it shall become a law, unless changed to prevent the introduction of slavery.

Mr. Douglas was absent at the discussion and the bill was in charge of Mr. Bright. The continued absence of Mr. Douglas, at the bedside of his father-in-law, produced a very serious complication in the conduct of the Oregon case, for the Committee on Territories was divided in its sentiment in respect to the prohibition of slavery in Oregon. While there was little doubt that Oregon would be anti-slave ground, there was a decided opposition on the part of the Southern contingent to establishing a precedent.

"Should this measure succeed, and slavery be prohibited, it will be in derogation of the spirit and letter of the Constitution," said Mr. Mason of Virginia.<sup>1</sup> So persistent had become the opposition that

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Into the long discussion upon this intricate and unwieldy bill, which in itself fills three and one-half pages of the Congressional Globe,<sup>1</sup> we need not enter. It concerned the slavery question, with which Douglas had not so far interfered. The Senate accepted the compromise measure, but the House, by a vote of 112 to 97, laid it on the table without even reading it.<sup>2</sup>

On August 3, 1848, the Senate received a bill from the House to establish a territorial government for Oregon, which was read twice, when Mr. Clayton

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"He thought it impossible to settle this question on any geographical line ... but he would never cease to bring this question to a settlement. He would rely on the Constitutional mode of settling the question by the Supreme Court. In this dark and gloomy hour that was the dial-plate which glittered through and which he trusted would guide us to a safe and harmonious result. He moved to refer the (House) bill to the Committee on Territories."<sup>1</sup>

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"Inasmuch as the said territory is north of the parallel of 36°30' of north latitude, usually known

1. Cong. Globe, 30 C., 1 Sess., p. 1031

2. Ibid, p.1043.

of Delaware rose and spoke of the unceremonious treatment given to his compromise bill by the House. He deplored the inability of either the North or the South to propose an acceptable measure and then he defended the Committee's compromise because it placed the settlement of this dangerous question of slavery in the final appeal to the highest authority of the Supreme Court.

"He thought it impossible to settle this question on any geographical line . . . but he would never cease to bring this question to a settlement. He would rely on the Constitutional mode of settling the question by the Supreme Court. In this dark and gloomy hour that was the dial-plate which glittered through and which he trusted would guide us to a safe and harmonious result. He moved to refer the (House) bill to the Committee on Territories."<sup>1</sup>

On August 5, 1848, Mr. Douglas from the Committee on Territories reported the House bill for Oregon with amendments, one of which was to insert:<sup>2</sup>

"Inasmuch as the said territory is north of the parallel of 36°30' of north latitude, usually known

1. Cong. Globe, 30 C., 1 Sess., p. 1031  
2. Ibid., p. 1043.



as the Missouri Compromise."

On August 7, 1848, Mr. Douglas pushed the bill forward through an amendment, but could not get any action upon the anti-slavery amendment.<sup>1</sup>

After several attempts Mr. Douglas succeeded, on August 10, 1848, in gaining the full attention of the Senate to the anti-slavery amendment and Mr. Webster of Massachusetts spoke, saying, among other things, that he favored the bill as it came from the House, but would oppose it if amended as Douglas proposed.

"His objection to slavery was irrespective of lines and points of latitude; it took in the whole country and the whole question. He was opposed to it in every shape, and in every qualification, and was against any compromise of the question."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Calhoun of South Carolina said:

"He should vote against the amendment because he regarded it as ambiguous, and he was against all ambiguity. He opposed it because the North could not be more determined to exclude the South that he was to resist such exclusion.... He would now tell

1. Cong. Globe, 30 C., 1 Sess. p. 1048.

2. Ibid, p. 1060.

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1. Cong. Globe, 30 C., 1 sess. p. 1048  
2. Ibid. p. 1050.



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Mr. Niles of Connecticut complained: <sup>2</sup>

"That the Senator from South Carolina had traced the present crisis to a wrong cause, when he attributed it to the abolitionists of the North. The real fact is that it springs from the opposition made by the free states to the Southern policy of extending the institution of slavery over the new Territories... The free states think the slave power is strong enough, and they will oppose every effort to extend slavery over the continent."

So intense had the feeling become that an evening session was ordered and the debate was indulged in by Messrs. Hunter, King, Foote, Douglas, Mason, Webster, Berrier, Walker, Butler, Calhoun, Bright, Dickinson, Metcalf, Underwood, Davis, Hannegan and others.

The vote being taken on the Douglas amendment embracing the Missouri Compromise, it was carried,

1. Cong. Globe, 30 C., 1 Sess., p. 1060.

2. Ibid.

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33 to 21.

The vote was finally taken on the engrossment and decided in the affirmative, 33 to 22.<sup>1</sup>

The vote by states against the Oregon bill was as follows:

The New England States	12	votes
New York	1	"
New Jersey	2	"
Ohio	2	"
Wisconsin	2	"
Michigan	1	"
Florida	2	"

total against	22	"
---------------	----	---

Thus the opposition to the bill came from the Northern and Northeastern States, and was based chiefly on the slavery issue.

The bill became a law.<sup>(2)</sup>

We have several times hinted at the indifference displayed by Douglas towards the slavery phase of the American problem. So far as he is devoted to the principle of expansion - and our thesis is that this is a formative one with Douglas - so far will he turn aside any question which threatens to bar his progress

1. Cong. Globe, 30 C., 1 Sess., p. 1061.

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towards its fulfillment. While he was contending for the spread of the nation to the South-west, he was riding largely upon the enthusiasm of a section that was fighting for more territory. Their reason for this enthusiasm he did not concern himself with, for it advanced the cause of expansion. Barring a word of caution to the extremists, alike of the North and the South, he talked on perfectly safe and national lines.

When he was striving for the development of the North-west he felt his support must come partly from the conflicting sections, and was never sure that he could trust the question too far. That is, he must offend neither section; but he farther saw that the South was more dangerous than the North. It was this that led him to propose the extension of the Missouri Compromise Line to the Pacific. And why should this proposition be likely to win southern votes and also not offend the North? It would win the thinking element of the South because it was a vital declaration that all states carved out of territory south of 36°30' should be slave, whereas without this stip-

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ulation the matter would have to be threshed out anew at each admission. Moreover it was not generally thought at that time that slavery would ever be profitable north of  $36^{\circ}30'$ . The proposition would be only likely to offend those who, like Mr. Webster, raised the slavery question above "lines of latitude" and who could not be met by any suggestion short of prohibition. It would place the great North-west free-soil to the Ocean, and the loss of a state or two in the far south-west would not be a severe loss. It will be recalled how strenuously the discussion had turned, in Douglas' absence, to the twelfth section, embodying the National support to Oregon's adopted laws - and these negatived slavery; but the Compromise bill of Clayton's had been accepted and he had just returned in time to vote for it; that the House by a majority of fifteen felt different about it, and shelved the bill. By what we know of the famous agitation of the country in 1850 over the Compromise Measures, we may be very safe in stating that had not Douglas rescued this Oregon bill from its forced connection with the Cal-

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ifornia and New Mexico bills, and carried it through rapidly to completion, it would have gone over, perhaps to have made another part to the "Omnibus Bill" of Henry Clay. This service, at least, Oregon and the country owes to Mr. Douglas.

But the more interesting thought arises, what did Douglas himself hold as to the presence and the condition of slavery? Any adequate answer to such a query would belong to a thesis upon the slavery attitude of Mr. Douglas, or at least to a thesis embracing his Senatorial career upon the matter of expansion. But we can venture to include this in trying to ascertain how far Douglas has shown, in his approach to problems, the attitude of the moralist.

The problem of the statesman, in the view of Douglas, was to obtain a practical grasp upon the issues most pressing in his day, and to advance a solution that would furnish an immediate outlet. That to him was the right thing to do for the best interests of the people and of the nation. Having determined upon the need and having found the means

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of allaying it, apply the remedy, or press it for what it is worth. With him there is no nice balancing of motives, no raising of moral scruples, no questioning of righteousness of ends. He had long ago sworn allegiance to the political oracle of Democracy - and he included in that more than mere intellectual assent - it was a genuine physical and mental affinity. We cannot see that Douglas ever did more than accept this system, or creed, wholesale and at once put it in operation. So far as there was the spirit of worship in him it was the worship of Jacksonian Democracy, and so far as this could be said to be planted upon anything deeper, it was the belief in the greatness of his country. Our evidence for a belief of positive quality - in religion, the church, as morality is too slight to base any valuable statement upon. We have, however, abundant testimony that his married life, which begins in 1847, after his service in the House, was very happy and successful. The morality of his period was loose, and the conduct of so much of his political life in taverns and among immoral characters,

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There are those whose personalities become very effective in their moments of sublimity and per force carry their following, themselves, and even their opponents at times, forward in their moral enthusiasm to determinate action. The whole self of man seems to be fused into some compound of moral venture that raises him to an elevation which is the opposite of negation. If it is not moral, then it is frightfully immoral. A man whose influence is, alike over individuals and masses, very strong, is one whose motives are fairly consistent in the general tendency of their aim. So far as we have had to do with Douglas, there has not lacked a sturdy conviction and a practical consistency that in no way exceeded the ability or departed from the wish of the people to follow. The cement of personal friendships bound many to him, and his biographers testify to his uniform loyalty, and in all his personal conflicts to a pervading good will that was a salutary agent in his advance. He was an intense believer in the few things that held him, and the most prominent trait

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of his statesmanship, so far as it was an echo of his life, was its sincerity. To the extent of his power and the limit of his capacity Douglas believed in the mission of his country and in the wisdom of his own method of advancing it. Morally we cannot question his sincerity, however much we may quarrel with the roughness and crudeness of his methods, or may disagree with the logic of his deductions. In the work we have traced as formative in his case there has been no hesitation as to policy, no let up in his program of agitation, and no attempt to avoid full responsibility for any outcome.

We are perfectly aware that no statesman can expect to put through his own program of policy regardless of other issues that may be present, or may arise during his period, or that he may expect to be judged solely upon the merits of his own plan. His statesmanship will stand or fall according as it recognizes the inevitabilities of opposition, and includes them, or fails to do so. The success of statesmanship does not <sup>always</sup> depend on spontaneous popular approval, and the statesman in fact may have seemed

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to have sacrificed his every desire - as was popularly thought for instance - at the time of the Jay treaty. To the mind of John Jay the needs of the American nation were so vital, so imperative, that they balanced the inevitableness of the British demands. But in the field of popular legislation the statesman has to feel beneath him the approval of the nation lest he find himself wrestling with an inevitable opposition. Popular disapproval is not an "inevitable" to the diplomatist, while it becomes dangerously near being such to the popular statesman. The reasons for this need not concern us here, but we wish to emphasize the thought that there was rapidly shaping in the mind of Douglas this principle of statesmanship which he came to feel was bed-rocked in the will of the Western and the Southern people, and it was his to formulate and to carry it through. It was not a new principle of statesmanship - we had always been growing - but it was beginning to discover the presence of oppositions that might become inevitable

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in nature. To Douglas the question of slavery was a spectre of opposition, and it was to become more and more such, until he set himself the task of wrestling with it once for all. His record in the House on the slavery question, in the positive way, consisted in proposing the Missouri Compromise line for the Texas annexation, which was accepted, and in extending the Compromise line to the Pacific ocean, which was defeated, and in opposing the spirit of the Wilmot Proviso. This record is indicative chiefly of the fact that with regard to slavery as a moral question, he was in no way troubled. It was a political matter with Douglas, and his relation to it was one of compromise or any other form of postponement. There were undoubted signs, by the time of his election to the Senate, that a formative principle in regard to slavery as a political question, was rapidly rising into the foreground of his thought, but it will take the great struggle over the Compromise to give it definite shape. Because of the intimacy of the two questions, expansion and slavery, in the larger half of his public work, we have felt it





necessary to write upon the slavery phase. But we cannot state more, from the facts of his House career, than this - of his wish to avoid a question fraught with efforts to restrain or impede his cherished policy of expansion. Moreover, we have seen in our examination of Illinois State History, that slavery in a mild form existed in his own state, and that the state was settled by many who actually favored the institution, and by many more who were very hostile to its increase. Prejudice and early training ruled in the opinion upon the slavery question, and these Douglas could not hope to change, either way, therefore he tried to avoid it. And his heart was not in it, as was the heart of his future rival, Lincoln, for Douglas was not a humanitarian. The question, even the whole time Douglas was in the House, was omnipresent, and we cannot doubt that he had given many hours to its consideration.

4 - By following in detail, the speeches of Douglas upon the policy of expansion, upon the three phases of that subject - Texas annexation, the Mexican War, and the Oregon question, - and by





## CONCLUSION.

We have examined at some length the factors entering into the life of Douglas:-

1 - By laying bare many of the problems that arise in the early pioneer development of Territories and States, choosing that State with whose history Douglas became so intimately identified, and thus causing to stand out, the State features that absorbed him:

2 - By tracing the influences of his early environment - home and State - upon him and endeavoring to discover to what extent he was a product of his New England home:

3 - By noting the manner of his coming to Illinois and the way he used the various agencies in his successive upward steps to National recognition:

4 - By following in detail, the speeches of Douglas upon the policy of expansion, upon the three phases of that subject - Texas annexation, the Mexican War, and the Oregon question, - and by





presenting the substance of the opposition argument, etc.

As a result of this examination we would make the following statements:

1 - That the problems raised by the early history of Illinois are the problems that confront the early settlers in any new land, beyond the Mississippi - Frontier problems - and they are the problems that are to be taken up more and more by the General Government, and left less and less to the purely frontier whims of the advancing pioneers. The Indian problem, the survey and sale of the public lands, the reservations, transportation and public finance are to become National, rather than individual or squatter problems. Out of the

uncertain merging of these problems in Illinois some definite policy was already shaping when Douglas came to the State:

2 - That the Vermont life of Douglas exerted certain influences upon his life, beyond the purely physical, but these were largely negative, giving him strong antipathies to his home region. Patriotism for his country and love for Andrew Jackson





were the positive gifts of the Vermont region to this youth, and the development of these tendencies in later life effected his career considerably:

3 - That the purely State career of Douglas, in Illinois, in its turbulence and seeming irresponsible nature, was, after all, the real school of the man, where he not only found the work which he was fitted to do, but where he learned the methods that would prove successful in its doing, and where also he learned to know the West in its most essential and practical way - her people and their needs. It was in this period that he laid the basis for his Congressional work, through his work in the land office, and his relation to the organization of the party forces. It was here also that he began his great work for the development of the State's transportation facilities, later carried on with unbounded success in Congress, and above all, it was here that the people of Illinois came to worship the man whose statesmanship was directed to such practical ends:

4 - That the Congressional life of Douglas in the House of Representatives possessed a certain organic unity that was formative in his own





development, and may be called, in a positive sense, the first phase. This unity has for its center the principal of expansion and is first called forth by the public question concerning Texas. It received considerable augmentation through the period of the Mexican War, but reaches its greatest heights during the discussion on the Oregon question. After the abandonment of his fight for 54 degrees, forty minutes, his energies are devoted more largely to matters of internal improvement and organization and adjustment. This policy of expansion was the largest issue Douglas touched with power, and to which he gave the greatest care and attention, and in which, all things considered, he achieved the greatest success. It is our claim that this central thought dominates his House career, and stamps the character of the first phase of his National life.

No fully broad and general conception of the man and statesman can be gained from our study, but sufficient data have been presented to enable us to gauge pretty clearly how far Douglas had ad-





vanced in these few years of National Life.

He had risen from a very ordinary condition in life to the acknowledged leadership of his party in the lower House of Congress, and he was but thirty-four years of age. He had achieved this fame through the constant application of unusual talents to the satisfaction of the desires and the alleviation of the needs of a goodly portion of the people, and through the exercise of tact in the skilful manipulation of friendships; negatively through a lack of those higher qualities of the soul that so frequently interpose their barriers of doubt and hesitation and shyness.

The ultimate result of the career of Douglas, so far as we are permitted to view it, is accomplishment - the doing of things in the smallest lapse of time, - and this was the summum bonum of frontier statesmanship. To bring about this accomplishment, Douglas had a keen knowledge of the first hand needs of the people in new settlements, and had, through close association with the people in all their pursuits and pleasures, acquired an almost instinctive feeling for the measures that





would appeal to his constituency. We are not denying that there may be, in all this, much that savors of time service, and if the chief concern of a ~~ward~~ politician and the great political boss, but one does not get very far in understanding the life of Douglas, who sees no more than these surface indications would show. Douglas did know the game of politics, from the ground up, but whatever taint we may feel has clung to his own person through his political career, we are brought to the admission that he was built upon a large scale - and that he strove mightily for the accomplishment of large ends - and that, through the persistence of his striving, large results have flowed into the central stream of State and National life. The real interests of the frontier were not looked after, nor met, by the statesmanship of the better trained members from the East, whether of Mr. Webster, of Mr. Winthrop, of Mr. King, of Mr. Giddings, or of the later period, of Mr. Calhoun or of many others. They reflected the atmosphere and worked sincerely and ably for the development of the country up to a certain limit, but they were out of touch and sympathy with the simpler, ruder but more energetic





and unruly elements of the West. They were not representative of this growing section. Hence the Westerner looked for men to represent their side of the political, economic and social questions, constantly arising, and naturally chose men of power to influence, to dominate, to control, - in short to bring results, in whatever way was possible - and these would generally be men of strong assertive personalities, bull-dog tendencies and great political talent, such men as Jackson, Harrison, Benton, Breese, Douglas, and others. What if the finer qualities were not so prominent in these men! Were they not still as truly the servants of the people because they spoke for those, amongst whom the refinements of an older community life had not yet had time to emerge? Those people represent us best, who know us best, have been brought up with us, and whose imagination can be most easily touched by the cries peculiar to us. And Douglas was loved, known, and trusted by Illinois and the West, in those days.

It is because, then, his work embodied so

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It is necessary, I think, to be satisfied so.



much of the peculiar sentiment of the Western folk - that it extended, proclaimed and wrought into statute law so much of the will of his people - that we have maintained his right to be called in this first phase of his National career - the phase of Expansionism - The Statesman of the Frontier.

## APPENDIX.





## A. HANCOCK COUNTY - ILLINOIS - 1837.

J. W. Peck: a Settler of Illinois,  
Philadelphia, 1837.

Hancock County is one of the largest  
and most flourishing Counties in the State. It  
is 40 miles long, 40 miles wide, and contains about  
1,770 square miles.

## APPENDIX.

The Hancock County is situated on the  
River, and its numerous branches. These streams  
not only enrich the country with an abundance of  
fertilizing matter, but also afford a fine water power,  
and are thus a source of great benefit to the  
people of the county.

There are many of various kinds, wheat,  
corn, clover, alfalfa, timothy, hay, &c., &c., &c.,  
and also many other kinds of grain, &c., &c., &c.,  
and also many other kinds of grain, &c., &c., &c.,  
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A. SANGAMON COUNTY - ILLINOIS - 1837.

J. M. Peck: A Gazetteer of Illinois,  
Philadelphia, 1837.

"Sangamon County is one of the largest and most flourishing Counties in the State. It is 48 miles long, 45 miles wide, and contains about 1,270 square miles.

"Sangamon County is watered by the Sangamon River, and its numerous branches. These streams not only furnish this county with an abundance of excellent water and a number of good mill seats, but are lined with extensive tracts of first-rate timbered land.

"Here are oaks of various species, walnut, sugar-maple, elm, linden, hickory, ash, hack-berry, honey-locust, mulberry, sycamore, cotton-wood, sassafras, etc.

"Much of the soil in this County is of the richest quality, being a calcareous loam, from one to three feet deep, intermixed with fine sand. This County contains a larger quantity of rich land





than any other in the state, and therefore can maintain a larger agricultural population, which is the great basis of national wealth. A distinguished writer, speaking of the State of Illinois, and this portion of it, writes:

"Our far West is improving rapidly; flourishing towns have grown up, farms have been opened, comfortable dwellings, fine barns, and all appurtenances in a country in which the hardy pioneer had but five years ago sprinkled a few log-cabins. The conception of Coleridge may be realized sooner than he anticipated. The possible destiny of the United States, as a Nation of one hundred millions of freemen, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, living under the laws of Alfred and speaking the language of Shakespeare and Milton, is an august conception. Why should we not wish to see it realized?"

"The State of Illinois has probably the finest body of fertile land of any State in the Union, and the opportunities for speculation are numerous - property will continue to advance - admirable farms and town lots will be purchased





with a certainty of realizing large profits. The Country here is beautiful - equal in native attractions, though not in classic recollections, to the scenes in Italy; the vale of Arno is not more beautiful than the valley of Sangamon, with its lonely groves and murmuring brooks, and flowing meads.

"This County is in the geographical center of the State and will eventually be in the center of population."

(This book was widely circulated throughout the Eastern States, and was influential in drawing many to the West.)





B. ILLINOIS AND SLAVERY.

N. D. Harris: Negro servitude in Illinois.  
1904. pp 238-40.

"At the constitutional convention held in Springfield in 1862, an article referring to negroes and numbered XVIII, was added on March 5, to the proposed constitution. It read as follows:

" ' Section I: No Negro or Mulatto shall migrate or settle in this State, after the adoption of this Constitution.

" ' Section II: No Negro or Mulatto shall have the right of suffrage or hold and office in this State.

" 'Section III: The General Assembly shall pass all laws necessary to carry into effect the provisions of this article.'

"Though the Constitution was defeated by 16,051 votes - for fear of democratic control - the vote on the negro sections was decisive -

In favor of Section I - 100,590.

In favor of Section II - 176,271.

In favor of Section III - 154,524.





"No better commentary than this vote can be found on the real attitude of Illinois toward the negro at that time. They did not want him in the State. The result of the Civil War did not greatly effect the prevalent opinion on these points."

In the first volume, Polk's words are alleged to justify his personal opposition to the Negro question to a vote. - See Vol. 1, p. 12.

In a long conversation with me, the President expressed his disapproval of the appointments, and explained the difficulties under which the President labored.

"I told him that he could, if he wished, send the Secretary of War to the President's office, and that he could, if he wished, send the Secretary of War to the President's office, and that he could, if he wished, send the Secretary of War to the President's office."





C. DOUGLAS AND PRESIDENT POLK.

The relations of Douglas with President James K. Polk, have always been considered to have been very close. Douglas would have preferred another man for the office, but when Polk was nominated, he went to Tennessee to speak for him in the campaign. The best evidence of these relations during the administration of Polk, comes from the "Diary of Polk" first published from the original manuscript held by the Chicago Historical Society, 1910.

In the first volume, Polk urges Douglas to push his Message Recommendations on the Oregon Question to a vote.- See Diary, vol. I p 295.

In a long conversation with Douglas the President reproves him for complaining of certain appointments, and explains the difficulties under which the President labors.

"I told him that he could, if he would, lead the democratic party in the House." ibid, p 478.

Polk dissuaded Douglas from trying for the position of Brigade-Major in the war, on the





ground that he did not favor making such appointments to those serving in Congress. He expressed himself as pleased that Douglas should be willing to follow his advice. - *ibid*, pp 482-484.

The President had a long confidential talk with Douglas and Thompson of Pennsylvania, and gave a forecast of the governmental position on matters concerning the establishment of government in the conquered territories.

He also gave Douglas a view of secret documents to accompany his Message in order that he might be prepared as the defender of his policy, to explain the Message in the House. This was in reference to the General Kearney episode. - "Diary" - Vol 2, pp 284-5.

Other consultations are recorded, and we can believe that while the personal relations between the men were not very warm, Polk leaned much on the political support he received from Douglas, and no man in the House received more of his confidence. This is high praise, for it is now conceded that Polk was an abler man and of larger influence than he has been given credit for. George





Bancroft, a Member of his Cabinet, and a historian says, "His administration, viewed from the standpoint of results, was perhaps the greatest in our history . . . . He succeeded because he insisted on being its center, and in over-ruling and guiding all his secretaries to act so as to produce unity and harmony." - See Biographical Sketch, to the "Diary" by M. M. Quaife, p XXIX.

We must recall that not only were the annexation of Texas, the settlement of the Oregon Boundary dispute with Great Britain, and the California matter settled, but the tariff for revenue was established, replacing the high protective tariff of 1842.

There was much of the Puritanic about Polk, and he could hardly be called a loveable man. He had courage and a certain narrow obstinacy of temperament that was fatal to very close ties of friendship. His lack of vision prevented his understanding the connection between the Mexican War and slavery.





D. BRITISH DIPLOMACY ON TEXAS.

E. D. Adams: British Interests and  
Activities in Texas - 1838 - 1846.

The objects of Great Britain in Mexico  
and Texas.

- 1 - To prevent expansion of the United States  
and annexation of Texas.
- 2 - To secure the abolition of slavery in Texas.
- 3 - To add influence against slavery in the  
United States.
- 4 - To connect Texas with England, commercially.

Contemporary politicians made much of the  
idea that Great Britain was planning intervention.  
It figured largely in the Polk campaign. Later  
historians as, Schouler, Von Holst, H. H. Bancroft,  
and Professor Reeves, unite in denying and strong  
desire or effort on the part of Great Britain to  
interfere.

"England at first took little interest  
in the revolt of Texas - but when British agents in  
America called Palmerston's attention to the new  
Republic, and assured him it would never be re-con-





quered by Mexico, he looked into the situation." - See Adams: pp 226. Then England signed the Hamilton Treaty of recognition of Texas. Aberdeen succeeded Palmerston, and he directed the British diplomacy in support of the Mexican Republic. He favored Mexico and then the Ashburton Treaty of boundary (N.E.) was deemed unsatisfactory to the British. This led Aberdeen to look more into Texas, and into the clause of the Eighth Article, in regard to joint cruising squadrons to prevent slavery traffic, which gave him ground to carry out abolition plans. He now pressed for abolition in Mexico, even, and pushed the armistice plans. This gave American people cause for objecting to British interference with their National institution and aroused great feeling. Aberdeen gave an official denial of any desire to interfere with United States conditions.

"The difficulties of Aberdeen's program had their origin in his effort to put nearly equal emphasis, upon two naturally conflicting points of policy. The first point was the maintenance of peaceful and friendly relations with the U. S.; the second, which in the development of his policy had





ultimately to be sacrificed to the first, was the restriction of the U. S. to its then boundaries.

. . . He believed he could maintain unruffled, peaceful relations with America and at the same time check expansion to the South and West. . . .

But the spirit of the nation, his own preference, and the integrity of British diplomacy demanded the continuance of peaceful relations with America." - Adams, pp 232 - 3.

The reply of Aberdeen to Pakenham's suggestion for a colony in California is: "A concise statement of the entire British attitude at the moment and represents the almost unanimous opinion of English Statesmen that the day for Colonial enterprise had passed." - Adams, p 240.





E. DOUGLAS AND THE IOWA BOUNDARY.

Mr. Dodge of Iowa, by leave, introduced a Bill to define the boundaries of the State of Iowa, and it was referred to the Committee of Territories. Congressional Globe, 29 Cong. 1 Session, p 186.

Mr. Douglas, from the Committee on Territories reported an amendatory Bill.-- Cong. Globe. 29 Cong. 1 Session, p 562.

The Bill under discussion was for changing the boundary of Iowa by striking out the words "Forty-three degrees, thirty minutes", and inserting in lieu thereof, "Forty-two degrees,". Douglas opposed the reduction on the ground that the people of the State had voted, and that a reduction of 15,000 square miles had already reduced it on the North and extended it to Missouri on the West. The original Bill ought to pass as natural boundaries existed and the State would not have to call another Convention, but could come in to the Union at once. The Bill was carried. -Cong. Globe. 29 Cong. 1 Sess. pp 938 - 40.





Mr. Douglas, from the Committee on Territories reported the Bill for admission of Iowa as State, and the Bill was read twice by title. - Cong. Globe, 29 Cong. 2 Sess. p 53.

The nature of the bill was explained by Douglas, read a third time, and passed. *ibid*-p 57.





F. THE MEXICAN CESSION.

"In 1848 a further addition was made to our territory by the Treaty of Guadalupe - Hidalgo. This added to the Country the area of California, Nevada, Utah, and parts of Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico.

"The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo was concluded Feb. 2, 1848, and proclaimed, July 4, 1848. The clause in it defining our acquisition of territory was:

"Article V: The boundary line between the two Republics shall commence in the Gulf of Mexico, three leagues from land, opposite the mouth of the Rio Grande, other wise called the Rio Bravo del Norte, or opposite the mouth of its deepest branch, if it should have more than one branch emptying into the sea; From thence up the middle of that River, following the deepest channel, where it has more than one, to the point where it strikes the Southern boundary of New Mexico: thence Westerly along the whole Southern boundary of New Mexico, (which runs North of the town called Paso) to its





Western termination; thence Northward along the Western line of New Mexico, until it intersects the first branch of the River Gila (or if it should not intersect any branch of that river, then to the point on the said line nearest to such branch, and thence in a direct line to the same); thence down the middle of the said Branch and of the said River until it empties into the Rio Colorado; thence across the Rio Colorado, following the division line between Upper and Lower California, to the Pacific Ocean." - Henry Gannett, Boundaries of the United States, and of the Several States and Territories. 3rd. Edition.





F. Act to Establish Territorial  
Government of Oregon.

The final act to establish the territorial government of Oregon, includes 27 sections, and the subjects of the chief ones are as follows:

Section I : The establishment of the temporary government for Oregon: The proviso as to the Indians: Confirmation of title to Missionary stations: Reservation of Power to divide territory.

Section II : The executive power vested in a Governor, his tenure of office, powers, duties, emoluments, etc.

Section III: The Secretary and his powers and duties; ruler on death of Governor.

Section IV: Legislative assembly to consist of a council and House of Representatives. How composed and terms of session.

Section V: Qualifications of voters: None but citizens to vote or hold office.

Section VI: Extent of Legislative power.

Section IX: Judicial power equals Supreme Court, District Courts, Probate Courts, and justices





of the peace. Extent of jurisdiction.

Section X: Appointment of attorney and marshal and duties.

Section XI. The above Court officers and the governor and secretary appointed by the President with advice and consent of the Senate; compensation of members of Legislature; Sessions of legislature and expenses.

Section XII: Salmon Leaps not to be obstructed.

Section XIII: Appropriations for services of expresses, and for Indian presents.

Section XIV: Ordinance of 1787 extended over Oregon: "and the existing laws now in force in the territory of Oregon, under the authority of the provisional government established by the people thereof, shall continue to be valid and operative therein, so far as the same be not incompatible with the constitution of the U. S., and the principles and provisions of this act . . . but all laws heretofore passed in said territory making grants of land. . . shall be, and are hereby declared to be null and void."

Section XV: Times of holding session of legislative assembly and location of seat of government.





with building appropriation.

Section XVI: Delegate to House of Representatives of the U. S. to be elected.

Section XVII: Civil and criminal procedures specified.

Section XIX: Library appropriation.

Section XX: Reservation of lands for use of schools, Sixteen and thirty-six in each township.

Section XXIII: Collection district of Oregon established and collector to be appointed. Astoria selected.

Section XXIV: Ports of delivery.

Section XXVI: Revenue laws extended over said territory.

Section XXVII: Appropriation for light-houses and buoys to Oregon.

Approved August 14, 1848.

Oregon became a State, Feb. 14, 1859.





G. RECORD OF WORK OF DOUGLAS IN THE  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

1st Session of 28th Congress.

In this session of Congress Douglas was recognized for brief remarks by the Speaker twenty-one times, besides which he introduced resolutions, and made extended remarks on -

- (a) Bill to refund the Jackson fine.
- (b) Report of Committee of Elections.
- (c) Western Harbor Bill (several times).
- (b) Civil and diplomatic appropriations bill.

2nd Session of 28th Congress.

Recognized for brief remarks, twenty-one times and spoke at length upon -

- (a) Independent Treasury Bill.
- (b) Texas Resolutions.
- (c) Oregon Bill
- (b) Admission Iowa and Florida as States.





- (e) Furnishing of President's House.
- (f) Purchase of Histories of Oregon and California.
- (g) Joint Resolutions Annexing Texas.

1st Session of 29th Congress.

Recognized by speaker for brief remarks fifty-five times, and introduced six resolutions, and spoke at length upon these, and upon -

- (a) Bill for Territorial Government of Oregon
- (b) Oregon (over a dozen times)
- (c) President's veto of Harbor Bill.
- (d) Pay and Duties of Attorney-Generals.
- (e) Contested Election for Florida.
- (f) Public printing.
- (g) Native Americanism and naturalization laws.
- (h) Oregon Bill. (Rifemen). (over six times).
- (i) Oregon Territorial Government several times.
- (j) Mileage of Senators.
- (k) Harbor Bill (several times).

- (6) Presentation of President's Message.
- (7) Progress of Activities of Oregon and Will-

State.

- (8) Joint Resolutions Annexing Territory.

1st Session of 23rd Congress.

House of Representatives for 1833-1834

January 15th, 1833, and throughout the session.

and House of Representatives for 1834-1835

- (1) Bill for Territorial Government of Oregon

- (2) Oregon (over a dozen times)

- (3) Resolution on Oregon Bill.

- (4) Pay and Pensions of Army and Navy.

- (5) Contested Election for Oregon.

- (6) Indian Affairs.

- (7) Native American Affairs and Legislation

and

- (8) Oregon Bill (reconsidered) (over 10 times).

- (9) Oregon Territorial Government (over 10 times).

and

- (10) Messages of Congress.

- (11) Oregon Bill (reconsidered) (over 10 times).



- (l) Appropriation Deficiency.
- (m) Army appropriation Bill (Mexican War).
- (n) Iowa Boundary Bill, several times).
- (o) Regulation official appointments at Washington.

2nd Session of 29th Congress.

Recognized thirty-three times and introduced resolutions, and spoke at length upon:-

- (a) Oregon, many times.
- (b) Establishment Civil Government in Mexico.
- (c) Admission Iowa into Union.
- (d) Taylor and the Mexican War.
- (e) Conduct of Shields.
- (f) Expulsion of Union Reporters, many times.
- (g) His own proposition, adopting the Missouri compromise line as a substitute for the Wilmot Proviso.





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